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'West Point is failing'

Recent graduates reveal racist incidents at academy, urge leaders to respond

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

Recent U.S. Military Academy graduates implored leaders at the West Point, N.Y., institution to strongly condemn racism and institute a zero-tolerance policy in a letter that revealed some of them were victims of racist acts while attending the school.

In the June 25 letter to West Point and Army

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point held its graduation and commissioning ceremony for the Class of 2020 on West Point, N.Y., on June 13.

BRANDON O'CONNOR
U.S. Army

leaders, nine graduates of the academy from 2018 and 2019, including the top ranking cadets and graduates from both classes, condemned racism at their alma mater and urged leaders to introduce a curriculum meant to address race and diversity directly. The now-Army lieutenants, in a 40-page policy proposal included with their letter, documented such racist incidents including a noose left on a Black cadet's dormitory desk "as a joke" by a white roommate, a top cadet leader's photo altered

SEE ACADEMY ON PAGE 5

US general sees smaller, enduring Iraq troop presence

By LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Six months after a deadly American airstrike in Baghdad enraged Iraqis and fueled demands to send all U.S. troops home, the top U.S. general for the Middle East is talking optimistically about keeping a smaller, but enduring military presence there.

Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, the commander of U.S. Central

Command, met Tuesday with Iraq's new prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, and said afterward that he believes the Iraqis welcome the U.S. and coalition troops, especially in the ongoing fight to keep Islamic State militants from taking hold of the country again.

"I believe that going forward, they're going to want us to be with them," McKenzie told a small group of reporters, speaking by phone hours after he left Iraq. "I don't sense there's a mood right now for us to depart precipitously. And I'm pretty confident of that."

Tensions spiked between the U.S. and Iraq in January after a U.S. drone strike near the Baghdad airport killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. Angry Iraqi lawmakers, spurred on by Shiite political factions, passed a nonbinding

SEE IRAQ ON PAGE 7

■ McKenzie not convinced bounties led to troop deaths

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Hiring soared in May as mass layoffs eased

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The job market took a big step toward healing in May, though plenty of damage remains, as a record level of hiring followed record layoffs in March and April.

The Labor Department reported Tuesday that the number of available jobs rose sharply as well, but remained far below pre-pandemic levels.

The figures, from the government's Job Openings and Labor

Turnover survey, or JOLTS, illustrate the whiplash the economy has experienced since the pandemic intensified in mid-March. Layoffs soared in March to a stunning 11.5 million, roughly four times the peak during the 2008-09 recession. They remained extraordinarily high in April, at 7.7 million, but in May they fell back to pre-pandemic levels of 1.8 million.

Hiring, meanwhile, plunged in April to 4 million, the lowest level since 2011, but jumped to 6.5 million in May. While that is the most

hires on records dating back to 2000, it wasn't nearly enough to offset the roughly 19 million layoffs in March and April.

And whatever ground has been recaptured to this point is now being imperiled by a resurgence of COVID-19 cases throughout the South and West.

The JOLTS report provides gross totals of hiring and layoffs, while the monthly jobs report, which also includes the unemployment rate, is a net figure of total jobs gained or lost.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (July 9)	\$1.10
Dollar buys (July 9)	40.8632
British pound (July 9)	\$1.23
Japanese yen (July 9)	105.00
South Korean won (July 9)	1,167.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2589
Canada (Dollar)	1.3548
China (Yuan)	7.0034
Denmark (Krone)	6.5754
Egypt (Pound)	16.0404
Euro	\$1.1331/0.8826
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7502
Hungary (Forint)	31.23
Israel (Shekel)	3.4431
Japan (Yen)	107.50
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3081
Norway (Krone)	9.4185
Philippines (Peso)	48.51
Poland (Zloty)	3.96
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7512
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3830
South Korea (Won)	1,193.57
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9384
Turkey (Baht)	\$1.20
Turkey (New Lira)	6.8619

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.08
3-month bill	0.14
30-year bond	1.39

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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KRISTI KIMMEL

ADVERTISING

CustomerService@stripes.com

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DSN: 314.583.9111

MIDDLE EAST

KRISTI KIMMEL

ADVERTISING

CustomerService@stripes.com

+49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
DSN: 314.583.9111

PACIFIC

ICHIRO
KATAYANAGI

ADVERTISING

PacificAdvertising@stripes.com

CML +81 (42) 552.2511 ext. 77313
DSN: 227.7313

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MILITARY

Nav cancels physical fitness tests for fall

By THERON GODBOLD
Stars and Stripes

Sailors are spared their fall round of physical fitness tests, and professional education for senior enlisted sailors is being revamped because of the coronavirus, the Navy announced Tuesday.

The fitness tests have been suspended, along with body composition measures — what sailors call “getting taped” — according to a Navy administrative message. Fitness leaders are directed to make no official updates for fall to sailors’ information in the management system.

“The COVID-19 situation requires that we continue to minimize risk to personnel,” the message says, using the name for the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

However, the suspended fitness requirements do not apply to new recruits in boot camp and sailors who need a passing score on a retest for retention or promotion. The latter may take an “official,” or “mock,” test administered under tight guidelines.

Sailors perform the mock fitness test, despite the name, but the results are not entered into the management system and applying only to reenlistment or retention, according to the message.



NELSON DOROMAL JR./U.S. Navy

A sailor leads a virtual physical training session from Coronado, Calif., in May.

Other requirements apply to the unofficial test: subjects must be medically screened; no more than 10 people, including the administrators, may be present; and sailors must adhere to social distancing, face mask and other local require-

ments pertaining to the coronavirus.

Although the fall fitness test is suspended, “sailors are reminded to make good choices for a healthy diet and are to continue a level of fitness to maintain Navy physical fitness standards,” according to the

message, which was signed by Vice Adm. John Nowell, chief of naval personnel.

In a separate message also released Tuesday, the Navy announced it is increasing class sizes and streamlining distance-learning courses at its Senior Enlisted Academy, a 10-week leadership development program at Naval Station Newport, R.I.

Starting in October, each of the regularly scheduled nine classes will increase in size from 144 sailors to 198.

Distance learning will be delivered in a three-week block, mirroring the amount of time students will be in their residences, the message said.

Also, the Navy will not require academy students to complete two courses — primary professional military education and senior enlisted joint professional military education — prior to enrolling or completing the academy, according to the message.

Established in 1981, the academy is the Navy’s only professional military education institute for its senior enlisted force and provides senior enlisted leaders with education and training, according to the academy website.

godbold.theron@stripes.com
Twitter @GodboldTheron

Bill would prevent use of military funds for border wall

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House lawmakers are trying to prevent the wall along the U.S.-Mexico border from being funded with military construction money after billions have already been taken from Pentagon accounts, according to a new funding bill.

The legislation would prevent any funds for a military construction project from the fiscal years 2016 through 2021 budgets be used for projects related to the

southern border wall, according to a provision in the fiscal year 2021 appropriations bill from the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies subpanel of the House Appropriations Committee.

Projects including the construction of “a wall, barrier, fence or road along the southern border” or roads to access a wall or fence along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The funding bill was approved by the House subpanel Monday and will now be presented to the entire House Appropriations

Committee.

In February 2019, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border and directed the use of military construction funds as well as counternarcotic funding to pay for border-wall construction. The declaration diverted \$6.1 billion from military construction and countering drugs.

Up to \$3.6 billion in military construction funds were authorized to be used for the border wall and have been directed toward 11 barrier projects totaling

175 miles of fencing to be built in Texas, Arizona and California. The Pentagon diverted the money from 127 planned construction projects worldwide.

The appropriations bill would also prevent military construction funds going toward those construction projects that had appropriated funds but were canceled or postponed because of the national emergency declaration.

A provision in the Senate Armed Services Committee’s version of the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act

authorizes the reimbursement of the \$3.6 billion in military construction funding taken from the border. However, the House bill would not allow for this money to be appropriated.

Because the two bills are in conflict, the Senate and House Armed Services Committees as well as the chambers’ appropriations committees will have to negotiate the differences, according to a Senate Armed Services Committee spokesman.

kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlinkenney

Army to pay \$1.6 million toward noise reduction efforts at Stuttgart area range

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. Army says it will pick up most of the tab for a noise reduction project in the Stuttgart area aimed at quelling local anger over gunfire at ranges used by special operations units.

After years of negotiations with the suburban Stuttgart town of Boeblingen, the Army has said it will pay about \$1.6 million to construct barrier walls at two open-air sites at Panzer Kaserne firing range, said Larry Reilly, a spokesman for the garrison in Stuttgart.

The walls “will help deflect the sound as it travels outward from the firing ranges’ impact area,” Reilly said Tuesday.

Boeblingen will spend about \$340,000 on the project, he said.

The military is moving forward

with the project even as the Pentagon prepares to withdraw more than 9,000 troops from Germany in line with a directive from President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly criticized Berlin for not spending enough on defense.

It’s unclear what units will be removed from the country, but if special operations troops stationed in Stuttgart are sent packing, the U.S. could find itself investing in a range that would be used far less.

The costs for the project have soared since 2018, when estimates for the barriers were about \$800,000. At the time, the plan called for Boeblingen to pay up to \$340,000 for the project and the military to pay for the rest.

A year later, the project’s price tag rose to more than \$2 million. When Army officials agreed in July 2019 to pay all the added costs, U.S. European Command

intervened and said negotiations were still ongoing.

Now, the military is back where it was — paying all the additional costs.

The noise issue has been a point of contention between the Army and locals in Boeblingen for more than a decade. Over the years, the Army has altered training hours and made renovations to try to improve the situation. Special operations units have shifted some training to other ranges in Germany, but complaints from residents have persisted.

The U.S. Army has been at Panzer Kaserne — a former Nazi military base — since immediately after the end of World War II. Despite being a well-established military hub, the local government allowed residential development near the range throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Complaints about noise have



JASON JOHNSTON/U.S. Army

U.S. soldiers maneuver through a shooting range during an exercise at the Panzer Range Complex, in Boeblingen, Germany, in 2016.

grown over time, especially after the arrival of special operations units in Stuttgart in the 1990s and when training intensified in 2001, following the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

Originally scheduled to start this year, the noise abatement project isn’t expected to begin until the spring of 2021, Boeblingen officials said.

“We know that this will con-

tinue to test the patience of those affected,” the town’s mayor, Christine Kraayvanger, told the Stuttgarter Nachrichten newspaper Thursday. “However, I am convinced that all those involved are making the greatest possible effort to complete this comprehensive project as quickly as possible.”

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver

PACIFIC

US envoy issues rare criticism of N. Korean official

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The top U.S. official on North Korea accused a senior North Korean nuclear negotiator on Wednesday of being “locked in an old way of thinking,” days after the negotiator said Pyongyang won’t resume talks with Washington because of its “hostile” policies.

The comments by Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun were a rare case of a senior U.S. official directly criticizing North Korea since the two countries launched now-stalled diplomacy on North Korea’s nuclear arsenal in 2018. The comments suggest that Washington may not be interested in resuming the diplomacy anytime soon.

“I’ve seen some recent press reporting that the North Koreans are not prepared to meet with me on this visit,” Biegun told reporters after talks with South Korean officials. “We did not request a meeting with the North Koreans. This visit is to meet with our close friends and allies, the Republic of Korea, and we had an excellent discussion.”

Biegun was likely referring to recent North Korean state media reports that cited Vice Foreign Minister Choe Sun Hui as saying Pyongyang won’t resume the diplomacy unless Washington discards what she described as “hostile” policies. Choe, who has been deeply involved in the nuclear talks, also slammed the United States for its “shallow tactic” to use North Korea for domestic political gains.

“I also want to be very clear on one point. I do not take my direc-



Kim Hong-ji/AP

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, right, speaks to the media beside his South Korean counterpart Lee Do-hoon after their meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Seoul on Wednesday.

tion from (Choe), nor from Ambassador John Bolton,” Biegun said.

Along with Choe, Biegun was referring to President Donald Trump’s former national security adviser, who in his recently released memoir accused him of pursuing an “unhealthy negotiation path” by demonstrating a willingness to negotiate a step-by-step deal advocated by North Korea.

“Both are locked in an old way of thinking, focused on only the

negatives and what is impossible, rather than thinking creatively about what is possible,” Biegun said in a written statement published last Wednesday. That comment wasn’t included in his earlier verbal remarks to reporters, which were almost identical to the written statement.

It wasn’t immediately clear why Biegun’s verbal remarks did not include that comment. South Korean media speculated that Biegun may have been trying not to provoke North Korea too much,

though he also could have accidentally missed those parts.

In both his verbal and written remarks, Biegun, who has previously described Choe as his potential counterpart when talks resume, said the U.S. would be ready for talks with North Korea when his dialogue interlocutor is named, in his apparent disapproval of Choe as his counterpart.

“When Chairman Kim appoints a counterpart to me who is prepared and empowered to negotiate on these issues, they will find

us ready at that very moment,” Biegun said, referring to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

North Korea’s state news agency on Wednesday didn’t issue any fresh statements on the U.S. Earlier in the day, it reported that Kim had visited a mausoleum in Pyongyang to pay tribute to his late grandfather and state founder Kim Il Sung on the 26th anniversary of his death.

Trump and Kim have met three times since 2018, but the nuclear negotiations have fallen apart since their second summit in February last year in Vietnam. North Korea has repeatedly said in recent months that it would no longer give Trump the gift of high-profile meetings he could boast of as foreign policy achievements unless it gets something substantial in return.

North Korea recently dialed up pressure on South Korea by cutting off virtually all cooperation and blowing up an inter-Korean liaison office in its territory last month. That followed months of frustration over Seoul’s unwillingness to defy U.S.-led sanctions and restart joint economic projects that would help the North’s broken economy.

Some analysts believe North Korea will also avoid serious talks with the Americans for now and instead focus on pressuring the South in a bid to increase its bargaining power before an eventual return to negotiations after the U.S. presidential election in November. They say North Korea likely doesn’t want to make any major commitments or concessions when there is a chance that U.S. leadership could change.

Camp Humphreys places 8 S. Korean real estate firms off-limits

By KIM GAMEL
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. military’s largest base in South Korea has banned business with eight local real estate companies for 10 years over allegations of using fraudulent passes to access the installation.

Camp Humphreys said Wednesday that the businesses were placed off-limits after a review determined they had “conspired to illegally access” the Army garrison “using fraudulently issued base passes.”

“This directly affects the safety and security of the installation,” it added, saying the decision was made after a Feb. 13 emergency meeting with the area’s Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board.

“No U.S. personnel are allowed to do new business with these establishments as long as this order is in effect,” it said, stressing the ban was an administrative, not a judicial, action and not subject to appeal.

The garrison said the decision was made because of business practices that were charged by



Stars and Stripes

Camp Humphreys is home to U.S. Forces Korea, the 2nd Infantry Division and Eighth Army near Pyeongtaek, South Korea.

the South Korean government and reviewed by Army investigators and the disciplinary control board.

The announcement of the decision was delayed because of the

coronavirus pandemic and subsequent legal reviews, said garrison spokesman Steven Hoover.

Camp Humphreys, which is in the rural area of Pyeongtaek, has seen an explosion in population

to nearly 40,000 in recent years after it became the main U.S. military base in South Korea as part of a long-delayed plan to relocate most American forces, their families and civilian employees south of Seoul.

Most people live off-base and rely on local real estate companies to find housing.

The announcement, which was posted on Camp Humphreys’ Facebook page, said people who have leases with the affected companies could continue to do business with them for the duration but may not use the companies to renew the leases.

The banned companies were listed as Abba Realty, Christine Realty, JC Realty, GM Realty, Woongi Realty, Uptown Realty, New York Realty and You & I Realty.

GM Realty owner Lee Geun-sik, who said he has been a broker for more than three decades, denied any wrongdoing.

Lee also said the military had not reached out to him and the decision was announced without notice, although South Korean police had investigated him.

“I’m innocent. I did not commit any crime,” he said Wednesday

in a telephone interview. “We never got a chance to address the allegations.”

Min Won Ki, who runs Uptown Realty, said he only heard about the decision when one of his clients showed him the Facebook announcement.

“I feel this is very unfair because USFK just said we all did this without asking us,” he said, using the acronym for U.S. Forces Korea. “I’m over 60 years old and USFK has damaged my honor.”

People reached at the other companies either hung up without commenting or made statements but asked that their names be withheld.

One woman said the ban was unfair because she said the base pass didn’t provide access to facilities, but was only useful for the convenience of clients.

Another man who refused to identify himself said he got the base pass through a construction company even though he wasn’t an employee. But he said he needed the pass to work hard for his clients and the 10-year ban was too long.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @kingamel
chang.kyong@stripes.com

MILITARY

Academy: Graduates cite lack of meaningful discussion about race

FROM FRONT PAGE

to portray her as a monkey, and reports by dozens of Black cadets subjected to racial slurs by their classmates in recent years.

“West Point has demonstrated an inability to meaningfully discuss race and a tendency to silence such conversations when grassroots efforts attempt to start them,” the West Point graduates wrote in the letter that has been distributed via social media. “Not only should we be concerned that West Point graduates arrive at their units unprepared to have conversations about race, we should also be concerned that West Point’s inability to do so means that it is far easier for racist beliefs to be maintained through the academy, to the extent that West Point graduates are tying nooses and joking they be used on their Black peers.”

The policy proposal calls for West Point leaders to take specific steps to address “systemic racism (which) continues to exist at West Point” for the institution to teach anti-racism and provide space specifically for minority cadets on the campus.

“By failing in these areas, West Point ultimately fails to produce leaders of character equipped to lead diverse organizations,” they wrote. “In other words, West Point is failing to accomplish its mission.”

The authors ask that West Point leaders take a stronger public stance against racism, voice support for the Black Lives Matter movement, investigate any racial disparities in its disciplinary system, hire a full-time diversity chairperson, and publish 20 years of climate surveys that detail issues cadets report anonymously about their units.

They also called on the removal of Confederate-linked images on the campus, including honors erected in recent decades that list the names of West Point graduates who joined the Confederate cause. The policy proposal would strip West Point of “names, monuments and art honoring or venerating Confederate figures,” including a dormitory named for Gen. Robert E. Lee and artwork depicting Lee and Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard, both West Point graduates.

The proposal also calls for a commission to study whether to “contextualize or remove” other symbols or depictions of “slavery, the Confederacy, and white supremacy” at West Point.

Army Lt. Gen. Darryl Williams, the West Point superintendent, denied last month to USA Today that systemic racism exists at the academy. Williams, a 1983 West Point graduate, became the school’s first black superintendent in 2018.

West Point officials said Tuesday the academy leaders had received the letter and policy pro-

posal and the school’s inspector general had begun a “comprehensive review of all matters involving race at the academy.”

“The academy expects all cadets to be treated with dignity and respect. We take seriously all forms of racial inequality that marginalize or devalue members of our team,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Ophardt, West Point spokesman. “West Point does not accept, condone, or promote racism.”

But the authors of the letter — who include white and Black alumni — argued Black cadets’ assertions of racist incidents went ignored and that, in at least some cases, Blacks faced harsher punishment for minor violations than their white peers.

Army 1st Lt. Simone Askew, one of the authors, detailed an act of racism that she faced just after she was named the first Black, female top cadet in West Point’s history in Fall 2017. Askew wrote she came back to her dorm room one evening to find a photo of her altered with a monkey over her face.

“Though I was aware of the historical precedence of portraying Black people as monkeys, I wondered if the depiction suggested something about my leadership,” she wrote in the policy proposal. “Racing through my mind were all the presentations and conversations that I had given in the past 14 days as First Captain and whether I had made any mistakes. This self-derogation fueled in me a paralyzing fear.”

Askew, a Rhodes scholar, wrote the incident left her feeling she could make no mistakes in her leadership. During her senior year, Askew was regularly made available by the academy for high-profile media engagements. She wrote her experience with racism led her to question what support West Point was providing other minority cadets who were not being “paraded by the academy as a model to follow.”

Another West Point graduate wrote in the policy that the academy failed to ready her to respond to civil unrest that spread throughout all 50 states in recent weeks after the May 25 killing of a handcuffed Black man by Minneapolis police.

“In the days following the killing of George Floyd and the resulting protests, I realized just how unprepared I was to have conversations about this with my soldiers,” wrote 2nd Lt. Ashley Salgado, a 2019 graduate of Puerto Rico and co-author of the proposal. “I had received plenty of instruction on how to brief an operations order or how to occupy a patrol base but West Point failed to train me on how to have important conversations about race within a diverse Army.”

The policy proposal’s authors wrote they took inspiration from the “Black manifesto” penned in



BRANDON O’CONNER/U.S. Army

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point held its graduation and commissioning ceremony for the Class of 2020 on The Plain in West Point, N.Y., on June 13. Nine graduates from 2018 and 2019 wrote a letter to West Point and Army leaders condemning racism at the academy.

1971 by Black West Point cadets who successfully stopped a proposal by former President Richard Nixon to build a new Confederate monument at the institution.

They also wrote the proposal was meant as a quick response to a request issued last month by Defense Secretary Mark Esper for service members to provide his office actionable proposals to address racial injustice within the military.

Their proposal came as the Army has signaled it is open to a conversation aimed at renaming 10 of its southern installations named for Confederate generals. Legislative proposals introduced in both chambers of Congress aim

to strip those post of those names, but President Donald Trump has threatened to veto any measure that would force such changes.

Meanwhile, Pentagon leaders have signaled they could soon issue an across-the-board ban on the display of the Confederate battle flag on military installations, ships and other sites. The Marine Corps earlier this year issued such a ban and the Navy is in the process of implementing its own. Army leaders said last month that they were working with Esper’s office on the issue, but would not immediately implement their own unilateral ban on Confederate imagery.

The West Point graduates wrote

their policy proposal was a “call to action” and “now is the time for action.”

“To be sure, West Point has come a long way,” Askew wrote in the proposal. “Nevertheless, the reverence that West Point holds for racist figures is antithetical to the claims it makes about the next generation of Army leaders... If Black lives really do matter to the military — then that should be known. And, if they do, then that ought to be undoubtedly clear, as well.”

dstickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

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WAR/MILITARY

McKenzie skeptical bounties led to deaths

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The top U.S. general for the Middle East said Tuesday that the intelligence suggesting that Russia may have paid Taliban militants to kill American troops in Afghanistan was worrisome, but he is not convinced that any bounties resulted in U.S. military deaths.

Gen. Frank McKenzie, the head of U.S. Central Command, said in a telephone interview with a small group of reporters that the U.S. did not increase force protection measures in Afghanistan as a result of the information, although he asked his intelligence staff to dig into the matter more.

"I found it very worrisome. I didn't find that there was a causative link there," said McKenzie, who is the first Pentagon

official to speak publicly at length about the issue. He warned, however, that Russia has long been a threat in Afghanistan, where there have been many reports that it has backed Taliban fighters over the years with resources and weapons.

According to U.S. intelligence officials, information that Russia offered bounties to Taliban militants for killing American troops was included in an intelligence brief for President Donald Trump in late February. The White House, however, has denied Trump was briefed at that time, arguing that the intelligence was not credible enough to bring to his attention.

McKenzie said that while he could draw no direct link between any potential payments and U.S. casualties, it's common that intelligence is not definitive.

"We should always remember, the Russians are not our friends," said McKenzie,

who is traveling in the Middle East. "They are not our friends in Afghanistan. And they do not wish us well, and we just need to remember that at all times when we evaluate that intelligence."

He said there was no need to beef up security for troops there because the U.S. already takes "extreme force protection measures" in Afghanistan. "Whether the Russians are paying the Taliban or not, over the past several years, the Taliban have done their level best to carry out operations against us."

Just days after the February intelligence briefing, the U.S. signed an agreement with the Taliban, mapping out the withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan by May 2021. That date would be nearly 20 years after American forces invaded the country after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the U.S. by al-Qaida militants.

Trump had repeatedly said he wants to have all U.S. forces out of Afghanistan. His call in May for a quick exit fueled speculation that he wants troops out by the November election, as part of his vow to end U.S. involvement in what he calls "endless wars."

The U.S. pulled several thousand troops out this year, and now has about 8,600 there. Additional troop withdrawal is contingent on the Taliban's commitment that extremist groups, such as al-Qaida and Islamic State, not be able to use the country as a base to carry out attacks on the U.S.

Asked about the potential for pulling more U.S. troops out, McKenzie said he still does not believe the conditions allow for a significant reduction yet.

Thousands in Europe newly eligible to donate their blood

By **JENNIFER H. SVAN**
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Troops, veterans and military retirees who have lived in Europe for an extended period can once again give blood to the Defense Department's program after donor restrictions were relaxed to boost supplies during the coronavirus pandemic.

As of next week, the Armed Services Blood Program, including the Landstuhl, Germany-based ASBP-Europe, will accept blood, platelet and plasma donations from "many military, retirees and veterans and family members who have lived in Europe for some time," said Stacy Sanning, blood donor recruiter and spokeswoman for ASBP-Europe.

"These changes will help ensure we can continue meeting the military's blood needs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future," she said on ASBP-Europe's Facebook page.

The changes come after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration relaxed restrictions on who can donate blood, to address the "significant shortage in the supply ... in the United States" caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the agency said on its website.

The restrictions have been in place for years and are aimed at reducing the risk of blood recipients contracting variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, or the human form of mad cow disease, as well as HIV and malaria.

Under the new guidance, people who have lived in most Western European countries for more than five years will be able to give blood for the first time in de-

cadec, Sanning said.

Those who had spent that long in Europe since 1980 were previously ineligible to give blood as part of efforts to stop the transmission of mad cow disease.

Many nationals of Germany, Italy, Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands with base access will also be able to give blood to the ASBP.

But even under the new guidance, those who lived in the United Kingdom for three months or longer between 1980 and 1996, and in France or Ireland for five years or more between 1980 and 2001 are still ineligible to give blood. The three countries had high levels of mad cow disease during those time periods.

In addition, the wait-time for donating blood for people who have traveled to countries with malaria — including Afghanistan, Djibouti or Niger, where thousands of U.S. troops are deployed — has been reduced from 12 months to three months. Travelers to Kuwait, Qatar and Morocco do not need to wait at all before donating.

Wait-times have also been reduced for those who have had tattoos overseas or in a U.S. state that does not regulate tattoo facilities; individuals who have had ear or body piercing with single-use equipment; and men who have sex with men, among others, the new guidance said.

"For us, it's a game changer," Sanning said of the relaxed restrictions. "Around 85% of the people I meet on military installations throughout Europe were previously not eligible because they had lived here more than five years, had been to a malaria-risk country or gotten an overseas tattoo in the past year."

The FDA changes are based on analy-



Stars and Stripes

Medical technologist Lena Sapp applies a tourniquet to Senior Airman Jordan Burge during a blood drive at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in 2018. The Food and Drug Administration has loosened restrictions on who can give blood, making potentially thousands more troops, veterans and retirees who have lived in Europe eligible.

ses of recent studies and data and won't compromise the safety of the blood supply, the agency said. The guidance is expected to continue for the duration of the public health emergency and be reviewed when it ends.

As "military hospitals begin moving toward normal operations again, the need for blood will increase," Sanning said.

Military blood drives in Germany include one at Wiesbaden beginning Monday and at Stuttgart starting July 21. Blood

drives are also regularly held at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Donors must make an appointment.

All the blood donated to the ASBP stays within the military and is ready for use during missions, exercises and for patients in medical facilities, the program said on its website. Information about blood drives in Europe or blood-donor eligibility is available on ASBP-Europe's Facebook page.

svan.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripesktown



Maj. Gen. Stephen M. Neary

Neary takes command of Marines in Europe, Africa

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Maj. Gen. Stephen M. Neary took command of Marine Corps missions in Europe and Africa on Wednesday during a change in leadership ceremony at Panzer Kaserne in Boeblingen.

Neary replaced Maj. Gen. Patrick J. Hermesmann, who led U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa for the past year

and is retiring.

Neary previously served as the II Marine Expeditionary Force deputy commander and commander of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

At the same ceremony, Sgt. Maj. Aaron G. McDonald took over as the senior enlisted leader for the Marines in Europe and Africa. He replaced Sgt. Maj. Michael Woods, who had served as the command's

sergeant major since 2018.

While the Marine Corps has the smallest number of forces in Europe among the Pentagon branches, its mission has grown in recent years. In addition to crisis response forces based out of Spain and Italy, the Marines' Stuttgart area headquarters oversees troops on rotation in Norway who train with allies in the Arctic.

news@stripes.com

WAR ON TERRORISM

Outspoken Iraqis fear rogue groups after analyst killed

By SAMYA KULLAB
Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The killing of a prominent security analyst who had received threats from Iran-backed militias has struck fear in the hearts of outspoken Iraqis concerned that they, too, could be targeted by armed groups.

The death of Hisham al-Hashimi also highlighted the limits of Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi's power to reign in armed groups acting outside the state's authority, experts and Iraqi officials said Tuesday.

Iraqi mourners and relatives of al-Hashimi carried his body in a funeral procession hours after he was gunned down Monday night outside his home in Baghdad's Zeyouneh neighborhood. His casket, draped in the Iraqi flag, was taken to his family home before being driven to the burial site in the holy city of Najaf.

Al-Hashimi, a leading expert on militant Shiite and other militant organizations, was a regular fixture on Iraqi television and his expertise was often sought by government officials, journalists and researchers.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the killing, which comes weeks after he confided to close friends that he had received

threats from militia groups. The slaying also coincides with a spate of rocket attacks targeting U.S. interests that has been blamed on Iran-backed armed groups.

Al-Kadhimi vowed to pursue al-Hashimi's killers, saying "Iraq would not sleep" until they were brought to justice, during his weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

But critical voices in Iraq, especially those supporting anti-government protests and people outspoken against militia groups, are contemplating changing their online presence in the aftermath of al-Hashimi's death.

Mariam, 26, an activist who participated in anti-government protests in Baghdad's Tahrir Square that erupted in October, said she has stopped posting on social media for the time being.

"What has shocked us is that they killed someone with Hisham's connections and influence. Activists across Iraq have been kicked with impunity for years, and especially during the protests," Mariam said, asking that her last name not be used for fear of retribution. "With his death we are in disbelief, and we are being careful."

Al-Hashimi's assassination was a message meant to silence critics, said Ruba Ali al-Hassani,



KHALID MOHAMMED/AP

An Iraqi Federal Policeman stands guard while mourners hold the flag-draped coffin of Hisham al-Hashimi during his funeral in Baghdad on Tuesday.

an academic researcher at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto.

"Analysts are being targeted not because of who they are but because of what they represent and what their voices represent," she said. Al-Hassani co-manages the Iraqi Network for Social Media, a network of bloggers that tracks social media at the height of the Iraq protests.

Al-Hassani said Iraqi activists in Baghdad and the country's south, where mass protests were held in October, are being more careful with their online presence.

"They are saying, we have to watch our words now, we can't say everything online," she said.

Al-Hashimi had received threats from Islamic State group militants. But close friends said he had been growing concerned about threats coming from Iran-aligned groups after being a vocal proponent of the protest move-

ment in October. At the time, top leaders of the Popular Mobilization Forces said they could not help him ward off the threats. The PMF is a state umbrella group comprised of an array of militia groups, including Iran-backed ones.

This prompted al-Hashimi to relocate to Turkey temporarily with his family late last year. He returned in January, and as threats abated, he resumed making frequent media appearances in which he openly criticized militia groups.

Then, the menacing messages returned right as a government-imposed lockdown to stem the spread of the coronavirus pandemic shut down international airports.

During that time, close friends said, al-Hashimi never considered that his life was in danger.

"He thought they just wanted to silence him," said Iraqi analyst Sajad Jiyad, a close friend.

Suicide attack, roadside bomb kill multiple Afghan police

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A suicide truck bomber targeted a police district's headquarters in Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province on Wednesday, killing three officers, a local official said. Three other police officers, including a district police chief, were killed in a roadside bombing in eastern Ghazni province.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks.

In the Kandahar attack, the suicide bomber struck in the district of Shah Wali Kot, according to Bahir Ahmadi, the provincial governor's spokesman. The explosion wounded 14 persons, both policemen and civilians.

Ahmadi said the guards at the district headquarters realized the truck was suspicious and opened fire before it could reach the building. But the shooting set off the explosives' load, triggering a huge blast that caused the casualties and damaged several nearby buildings as well as the district headquarters, which also houses the office of the police chief and the district administrative department.

The roadside bombing in Ghazni, Waidullah Jamzada, the provincial governor's spokesman, said Habibullah, the police chief of Dayak district, was killed along with his two bodyguards. Habibullah, who, like many Afghans, used only one name, was inspecting checkpoints early in the morning when the attack happened, Jamzada said.

Separately, the Defense Ministry said Afghan soldiers repelled Taliban attacks Tuesday on army checkpoints in the district of Khowyati in eastern Nangarhar province. The statement said at least 20 Taliban insurgents were killed, including their group leader.

The Taliban did not claim responsibility for the Nangarhar attack or issue any statements about it. Both the Taliban and Islamic State are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Nangarhar. Afghanistan has seen a recent spike in violence, with most attacks claimed by the local ISIS affiliate.

The Taliban and the Afghan forces have been trading blame over the recent surge in attacks across the country — even as peace efforts press on to try and bring about the start of direct peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

Iraq: Relations with US have improved under new prime minister

FROM FRONT PAGE

resolution to oust all U.S.-led coalition forces from the country.

In response to the Soleimani killing, Iran on Jan. 8 launched a massive ballistic missile attack on al Asad Air Base, which resulted in traumatic brain injuries to more than 100 American troops. Two months later, U.S. fighter jets struck five sites in retaliation, targeting Iranian-backed Shiite militia members believed responsible for the January rocket attack.

President Donald Trump has vowed to bring troops home and halt what he calls America's endless wars. But he has also warned Iran to expect a bold U.S. response if Iranian-backed militias attack Americans in Iraq.

The U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003, but troops left in 2011. American forces returned in 2014, after Islamic State began taking over large swaths of the country.

McKenzie last visited Iraq in early February, slipping into the country for a few hours to meet with leaders as anti-American sentiment was soaring and violent protests and rocket attacks were pummeling the American

Embassy.

Relations, however, have improved since al-Kadhimi took over in May. And while some groups, such as parliament's Iran-backed Fatah bloc, continue to call for the withdrawal of U.S. forces, there is an emerging dialog between the U.S. and Iraq on the future relationship between the two nations.

McKenzie said the U.S. recognizes that al-Kadhimi is in a difficult position as he tries to deal with all factions within the government and maintain relations with both the U.S. and Iran.

U.S. officials criticized Iraq's government for being unable to rein in the Iran-backed militia groups it believes are orchestrating the attacks. And al-Kadhimi has pledged to protect American troops and installations from attacks.

The Washington Post reported, however, that McKenzie said Tuesday that al-Kadhimi has taken significant steps to confront the militias.

He commended al-Kadhimi for ordering a late June raid on a militia group the Pentagon has accused of launching repeated rocket attacks on American

personnel.

The unusual move against Kata'ib Hezbollah — which prompted an outcry from its leaders and the release of detained militia men — illustrated the challenges that al-Kadhimi faces.

"He's negotiating a land mine now. I think we need to help him," McKenzie said. "And he's just got to kind of find his way, which means we're going to have less-than-perfect solutions, which is nothing new in Iraq. But ... I'm a glass-half-full guy when I look at the prime minister and what he's doing."

McKenzie said he hopes the U.S.-Iraq meeting slated for this month will be face-to-face, but knows the coronavirus pandemic could affect that. The talks are expected to run the gamut of their bilateral relations, with Washington prioritizing future force levels to Iraq and the ongoing militia attacks, and Baghdad focusing more on its dire economic crisis.

"Certainly we need some foreign presence in Iraq," McKenzie said. "I don't know that it needs to be as big as it is now, because ultimately that's going to be a political, not a military, decision. But I think the Iraqis know, welcome

and value what we do for them now."

There are between 5,000 and 6,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

McKenzie would not say how many U.S. troops might stay. But he said Iraqi conventional forces now operate on their own. U.S. and coalition forces continue to conduct training and counterterrorism operations, including with Iraqi commandos. Any final decisions, he said, would be coordinated with the Iraqi government.

He said that as Iraqi troops grow more competent, fewer coalition forces would be needed.

The Washington Post contributed to this report.

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MILITARY

Impeachment witness retiring from Army

Lawyer for Lt. Col. Vindman cites 'retaliation,' 'bullying' by White House

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Army Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman, the former Ukraine expert for the National Security Council who testified in President Donald Trump's impeachment case, will retire from the military, his lawyer announced Wednesday in a statement that charged Trump with bullying.

Vindman was ousted by Trump in February from his White House role as director of European Affairs, after the soldier testified to House lawmakers that a July 2019 phone call between Trump and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had been "inappropriate." Vindman, who received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat in Iraq, testified publicly only after receiving a subpoena from Congress, his lawyer David Pressman said in the statement.

"[Lt. Col.] Vindman did what the law compelled him to do, and for that he was bullied by the president and his proxies," Pressman

wrote. "And yet, [Lt. Col.] Vindman would not be intimidated and will not be corrupted. He did what he has always done: put the interests of his country ahead of his own."

"Vindman's patriotism has cost him his career. Today our country loses a devoted soldier."

David Pressman
lawyer for Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman

scheduled promotion to colonel. Last week, Sen. Timmy Duckworth, D-Ill., blocked the scheduled promotion of 1,123 military officers until Defense Secretary Mark Esper provided her a guarantee in writing Vindman would receive his promotion and not face further retaliation in the



Vindman

Army.

Duckworth, who lost both legs after her Army Black Hawk helicopter was shot down in Iraq, said last week that it was "simply unprecedented and wrong" for Trump to involve himself in "routine military matters" such as the promotions of mid-grade officers.

Pressman's statement indicated Vindman, at least in part, chose to retire so he would not block other promotions. But the statement also acknowledged the lieutenant colonel felt he had no hope of advancing his military career.

"Through a campaign of bully-

ing, intimidation, and retaliation, the president of the United States attempted to force [Lt. Col.] Vindman to choose: Between adhering to the law or pleasing a president. Between honoring his oath or protecting his career. Between protecting his promotion or the promotion of his fellow soldiers," Pressman wrote. "These are choices that no one in the United States should confront, especially one who has dedicated his life to serving it."

Vindman's twin brother, Army Lt. Col. Niveny Vindman, was also ousted from his job as an attorney on the National Security Council by Trump in February after the president was acquitted by the Senate on impeachment charges.

Trump in a tweeted explanation for his decision to oust the brothers, labeled Alexander Vindman "very insubordinate." Trump also claimed Alexander Vindman's supervisors had accused the soldier of having "problems with judgment, adhering to the chain of command and leaking information." Trump also called on the military to further punish Vindman.

The Vindman brothers were born in the Soviet Union-run Ukraine before moving to the

United States at 4 years old. Alexander Vindman commissioned in the U.S. Army in 1999 as an infantry officer. In 2004, he was injured in a roadside bomb attack in Iraq. He joined the National Security Council in 2018.

In addition to his Purple Heart, Vindman's awards and decorations include the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantryman Badge, four Army Commendation Medals and two Defense Meritorious Service Medals.

Alexander Vindman testified in the House impeachment hearings that Trump had acted inappropriately during the July 25, 2019, phone call by pressing Ukraine's new president to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden, now the presumed 2020 Democratic presidential candidate, and his son Hunter Biden, over the younger Biden's work with a Ukrainian company called Burisma.

"Vindman's patriotism has cost him his career," Pressman wrote in the statement. "Today our country loses a devoted soldier, but it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure it does not lose the values he represents."

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

Dems want to end ban on transgender service

By STEVEN BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House Democrats on Wednesday urged the departments of Defense and Justice to eliminate President Donald Trump's ban of transgender service in the military.

Rep. Susan DeBene, D-Wash., sent a letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Attorney General William Barr calling on the agencies to lift the rule disqualifying transgender military service. The move follows a decision in June by the Supreme Court protecting gay and transgender employees from being fired, disciplined, or turned down for a job based on their sexual orientation. The letter was signed by 116 House Democrats.

"In light of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling ... we urge the Department of Defense to immediately update its policies to eliminate the ban on open transgender military service,"

lawmakers wrote in the letter. "Additionally, to prevent further harm to transgender service members, we urge the DOD to instruct the Department of Justice to negotiate the end to litigations challenging the ban."

The White House declined to comment on the letter.

Democrats have blasted Trump for unraveling rules put in place during former President Barack Obama's administration that generally allowed individuals diagnosed with gender dysphoria to serve in the armed services and as their preferred gender. In March 2019, the House approved a nonbinding resolution opposing strict limits on transgender service. The vote was 238-185.

"What this policy is primarily based on is ignorance and bias against the transgender community," said Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. "This is unfair discrimination, and it's also harmful to national

security."

Trump announced the transgender ban in July 2017 via tweet, writing the military needed to focus on "decisive and overwhelming victory" without being burdened by the "tremendous medical costs and disruption" of having transgender personnel. His sudden policy reversal surprised top military leaders.

"The policy is insidious in operation but designed to be as comprehensive a ban as possible," according to a report from the Palm Center, which studies LGBTQ military issues. "In that sense, it is a perfect parallel to the failed 'don't ask, don't tell' policy, also sold as not being a ban although designed to systemically push gay people out of military service — or at least keep them silent and invisible."

The Trump administration's policy is not a blanket ban on transgender service, however, advocates contend it is effectively a ban on new transgender recruits.

The new rules, which went into effect last year, require troops diagnosed with gender dysphoria serve in their biological sex. It also bars people with a history of gender dysphoria from joining the military unless they have been "medically stable" in their biological sex for 36 months and have not transitioned.

A 2018 Pentagon review on the matter stated limiting transgender service is needed amid mental health concerns unique to gender dysphoria compounding with the stresses service members face.

Young transgender individuals are at a much higher risk of suicide, risky sexual behavior, and drug use, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A 2019 CDC study found 34.6% of high school transgender students attempted suicide.

Beynon.Steven@stripes.com
Twitter: @StevenBeynon

Ex-USAF employee charged with stealing

Associated Press

GREENBELT, Md. — A Maryland man who worked as an Air Force travel coordinator has been indicted on charges that he stole more than \$774,000 in government funds.

Monday's federal indictment in Maryland charges Eddie Ray Johnson Jr., 59, of Brandynville, with theft of government property and money laundering, prosecutors said in a news release.

Johnson was a civilian Air Force employee from January 2003 to February 2018. His duties included planning congressional travel and reviewing and approving accounting packages submitted by trip escorts, according to prosecutors.

The indictment accuses Johnson of using a government-issued credit card to obtain more than \$1.1 million in cash advances and diverting at least \$774,000 for his personal use.

Johnson's initial court appearance for the indictment wasn't immediately scheduled.

The theft charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. The money laundering charge is punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

Marines close base on Okinawa 'until further notice'

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The commander of Camp Hansen has ordered the Okinawa Marine base closed "until further notice," according to a mass email alert from Marine Corps Installations

Pacific late Wednesday.

"By order of the Camp Hansen Commander, effective immediately, Camp Hansen will be CLOSED to all personnel attempting to enter until further notice, unless their quarters are aboard Camp Hansen," said the message sent at

10:43 p.m.

All personnel aboard the installation "should go to their quarters until further notice," it added.

No reason was given for the closure, which comes a day after nearby Marine Corps Air Station Futenma ordered personnel

to shelter in place for four hours after "several" people there tested positive for the coronavirus.

The infected individuals and their close contacts were isolated, according to a Marine Corps statement issued Tuesday evening.

news@stripes.com

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Trump: Reopen schools in fall

By COLLIN BINKLEY
Associated Press

President Donald Trump launched an all-out effort pressing state and local officials to reopen schools this fall, arguing that some are keeping schools closed not because of the risks from the coronavirus pandemic but for political reasons.

"They think it's going to be good for them politically, so they keep the schools closed," Trump said Tuesday at a White House discussion on school plans for fall. "No way. We're very much going to put pressure on governors and everybody else to open the schools."

The White House's roundtable gathered health and education leaders from across the nation who said schools and colleges are ready to open this fall and can do so safely. They argued that the risks of keeping students at home outweigh any risks tied to the coronavirus, saying students need access to meal programs and mental and behavioral health services.

"We want to reopen the schools," Trump said. "Everybody wants it. The moms want it, the dads want it, the kids want it. It's time to do it."

But that bright outlook was met with skepticism by some beyond the White House. The president of the nation's largest education union said Trump is more interested in scoring points for the November election than in keeping students safe.

"Trump has proven to be incapable of grasping that people are dying — that more than 130,000 Americans have already died," said Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Association. "Educators want nothing more than to be back in classrooms and on college campuses with our students, but we must do it in a way that keeps students, educators and communities safe."

At the White House event, Trump repeated his claim that Democrats want to keep schools closed for political reasons and not health reasons. The Republican president made the same claim on Twitter a day before, saying: "They think it will help them in November. Wrong, the people will!"

Trump offered no evidence for the allegation, which has been criticized by health experts who say politicizing the issue will make it harder to work toward reopening schools. Jennifer Nuzzo, of Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 Testing Insights Initiative, said she was "deeply troubled" by the claim.



JOE BURBANK, ORLANDO (FLA.) SENTINEL/AP

Rachel Bardes holds a sign in front of Orange County Public Schools headquarters in Orlando, Fla., as part of a protest Tuesday. OCPs teachers are protesting the decision by Gov. Ron DeSantis and the state education commissioner mandating that all public schools open in August despite the state's spike in coronavirus cases.

"When you make it about politics and just people trying to score points and get elected, I mean, I really think it's a disservice to how incredibly important this issue is," Nuzzo said in an interview. "And it really distracts from what I think we need, which is real solutions and a plan in order to make this happen."

Whether schools and colleges should open this fall and how has been a topic of growing debate as the coronavirus continues to surge in parts of the United States. Trump applauded Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis for his state's recent order to open public schools this fall.

And Trump attacked Harvard University for its decision to hold instruction online for the fall term.

"I think it's ridiculous, I think it's an easy way out and I think they ought to be ashamed of themselves, if you want to know the truth," Trump said Tuesday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has sent mixed signals on the issue, saying students should return to the classroom but also noting that virtual classes present the lowest risk of COVID-19 spread. Speaking at Trump's event, however, the agency's director said unequivocally that it's better for students to be in school than at home.

Dr. Robert Redfield noted that COVID-19 cases tend to be mild in young people, adding that the greatest risk is transmission from children to more vulnerable populations. He said the CDC encourages all schools to reopen with customized plans to minimize the spread of the coronavirus while giving students access to school services.

"It's clear that the greater risk to our society is to have these schools close," Redfield said. "Nothing would cause me greater sadness than to see any school district or school use our guidance as a reason not to reopen."

The CDC's guidance for schools recommends that students and teachers wear masks "as feasible," spread out desks, stagger schedules, eat meals in classrooms instead of the cafeteria, and add physical barriers between bathroom sinks.

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos criticized many schools' attempts at distance education after the pandemic prompted them to move classes online last spring. She said she was disappointed in schools that "didn't figure out how to serve students or who just gave up and didn't try."

The same thing can't happen again this fall, she said, urging governors to play a role in getting schools to reopen.

McConnell eyes bill as evictions, cuts in aid loom

By LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An eviction moratorium is lifting. Extra unemployment benefits are ending. Parents are being called to work, but schools are struggling to reopen for fall as the COVID-19 crisis shows no signs of easing.

With Congress bracing for the next coronavirus aid package, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., is outlining Republican priorities as earlier programs designed to ease Americans through the pandemic and economic fallout begin to expire. He is eyeing \$1 trillion in new aid.

"This is not over," McConnell said during a visit to a food pantry Monday in Louisville, Ky.

The GOP leader's next virus aid package is centered on liability protections, a top priority for Republicans seeking to shield doctors, schools, businesses and others from coronavirus-related lawsuits brought by patrons claiming injuries during reopenings.

McConnell is also considering a fresh round of direct payments, noting they are especially helpful for those earning \$40,000 a year or less. He wants the liability shield to run for five years, retroactive to December 2019.

"Liability reform, kids in school, jobs and health care," he said. "That's where the focus, it seems to me, ought to be."

Democrats have proposed a far more ambitious aid approach in the \$3 trillion House-passed coronavirus rescue package, setting the outlines of a robust debate over how best to help Americans as COVID-19 cases surge in hot spots nationwide, threatening public health and economic livelihoods.

Congress is away for a two-week recess, but the contours of the debate are taking shape before lawmakers resume session July 20. Deadlines for many programs expire by the end of the month.

McConnell's earlier decision to hit "pause" on new relief has infuriated Democrats, especially as state and local governments clamor for aid to prevent worker layoffs.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said in a statement Tuesday that McConnell "has created needless uncertainty and pain for millions of families who are still reeling from the public health and economic crises."

Schumer said, "Senator McConnell ought to be working across the aisle to prevent mass evic-

'Liability reform, kids in school, jobs and health care. That's where the focus, it seems to me, ought to be.'

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.
Senate majority leader

tions, a new hunger crisis, and the layoff of more essential state and local government employees — all things that will happen if Republicans continue to delay action or act stingily."

The earlier rounds of aid, including the sweeping \$2 trillion coronavirus aid package approved in March, were the biggest in U.S. history. And while aid was approved almost unanimously, it is now dividing the parties. Many Republicans view the outlay as excessive, and they want to avoid another round of big-ticket spending. Democrats argue that more aid is needed, and their bill includes new worker health and safety protocols to ensure a safe reopening.

While the two sides share many common goals in boosting public health research toward treatments and a vaccine, the difference in the economic aid to Americans is stark.

For example, Republicans mostly oppose the \$600 weekly boost to unemployment benefits, arguing it's a disincentive to work because some employees earn more by staying home than they would on the job. Democrats say it's a lifeline for struggling Americans trying to make ends meet.

Democrats also provide more money in their bill to prevent evictions: \$100 billion in rental assistance and \$75 billion for homeowners paying mortgages. The \$2 trillion coronavirus aid package's 120-day federal eviction moratorium on certain rentals expires at the end of July. The Democrats' bill would extend it through March 2021.

Democrats are wary of the liability protections being proposed by Republicans. Instead, their bill includes other priorities, such as funding to shore up the struggling U.S. Postal Service, which they see as another lifeline for Americans, and to provide \$50 monthly stipends toward broadband services for households with laid-off or furloughed workers to stay connected online.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Trump 'flexible' on convention size as lawmakers shy away

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With coronavirus cases surging in Florida, President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he's "flexible" on the size of the Republican National Convention in Jacksonville.

The president spoke as a growing number of Senate Republicans said they'd skip the event, and even as the White House tried to tamp down nationwide concern about the virus's spread.

Asked in an interview Tuesday whether he'd want to limit the gathering if the state's coronavirus cases continue to rise, Trump replied that the decision "really depends on the timing."

Florida's COVID-19 positive test rate is 18.7%, making it second only to Arizona among states where coronavirus infections are surging.

Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas on Tuesday reported its largest one-day increase in hospitalizations due to the coronavirus, even as the state's new virus cases decreased.

The department of Health reported 369 people hospitalized in the state because of COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, an increase of 32 since Monday.

The department said at least 24,512 people have tested positive for the virus, an increase of 259 new reported cases. The department said 5,486 of those cases are active, meaning they don't include people who have died or recovered.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson said the increase in hospitalizations is putting stress on health care workers, but said the state's hospital system still has capacity to handle the spike.

California

SAN FRANCISCO — Indoor restaurants and outdoor bars in San Francisco will not open next week as planned, while in Santa Clara County officials expect to reopen hair and nail salons but will also hold off on indoor dining because of rising coronavirus infection rates.

A Northern California county, meanwhile, authorized fines Tuesday of up to \$10,000 for businesses that repeatedly violate health orders.

Despite the variations in what's open for business, health officials from both San Francisco Bay Area counties on Tuesday stressed the need for people to stay home, wear a face covering when in public and practice social distancing in order to coexist with a stubborn virus that "going to be with us for a long time."

Connecticut

Data released Tuesday indicates there were no new COVID-19-associated deaths in Connecticut since Monday, marking the first time since mid-March that the state has not reported a death tied to the disease.

To date, there have been 4,338 deaths associated with COVID-19 in Connecticut. The state has had more than 47,000 cases, including 57 new ones since Monday, and currently has an infection rate of about 1%.

"For the first time in months, there were zero COVID-related fatalities," zero COVID-related fatalities, said Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont, during a news conference in New Haven. He partially credited residents with continuing to wear face masks, noting "it makes a difference."

Meanwhile, the state's latest figures also show an uptick of 14 new hospitalizations, for a total of 83. Lamont called it "a little disturbing," but believes it likely stems from fewer discharges. While hospitalizations were a key metric for the state earlier in the coronavirus pandemic, he said it's less important now considering the large number of available beds in Connecticut's hospitals.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii reported 41 additional cases of the coronavirus on Tuesday, the most in one day since the pandemic began.

The increase, coming after a 29-case increase on Friday, is an indicator the virus was circulating more widely and was part of a "disturbing" trend, said Bruce Anderson, the director of the state Department of Health.

He said most cases in recent months had been associated with known clusters of cases. It had been increasingly not been the case, he said.

Hawaii has had the lowest infection rate per capita among the 50 states along with the lowest hospitalization and fatality rates. The state held the numbers down by keeping bars and restaurants closed, orders maintained in March and April, mask-wearing rules and a requirement that arriving travelers quarantine themselves for 14 days.

Illinois

BOISE — For a time in Idaho, it seemed like the worst of the coronavirus pandemic could be over. After an initial onslaught of confirmed cases in the spring, numbers had dropped by June to a point that state leaders felt comfortable allowing businesses to reopen and life to get back to



TED S. WARREN/AP

Nicholas Hartmann, center, shows a fish to a customer Tuesday at the Pure Food Fish Market at Pike Place Market in Seattle. Tuesday was the first day of a new statewide order that requires people to wear masks or other facial coverings inside businesses to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Business owners who fail to refuse service to customers who don't wear masks can face fines or lose their business license, but some business owners have raised concerns about turning away customers.

nearby normal.

A new spike of COVID-19 occurrences has prompted some concern, however. The number of daily confirmed new cases has quadrupled over the past two weeks to roughly 345 — nearly double what the numbers were during the state's first outbreak.

Idaho is still far from being a national hot spot: The state ranks about 14th in the nation for new confirmed cases per capita, and death rates linked to COVID-19 are minimal here compared to other states — with about 5.4 deaths per 100,000 residents, compared to about 171 deaths per 100,000 New Jersey residents, for example.

Iowa

URBANDALE — Local officials don't have the authority to require that residents use masks to halt spread of the coronavirus, Gov. Kim Reynolds said Tuesday, a day after the mayor of Muscatine issued such an order.

Asked at a news conference about Muscatine Mayor Diana Broderick's order, which took effect Monday, Reynolds said local officials need the governor's approval to implement such rules.

Because Reynolds has a public health proclamation in effect, a local official can't implement requirements that conflict with the state rules, the governor said.

Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — One of Louisiana's education leaders is calling for the cancellation of public school athletics this fall amid the resurgence of the state's coronavirus outbreak, with nearly 2,000 new virus cases confirmed Tuesday and hospitalizations from the COVID-19 disease heading above 1,000.

Senate Education Chairman Cleo Fields, a Baton Rouge Democrat, sent letters to the leaders

of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Louisiana School Boards Association, calling for the suspension of athletic events at K-12 public schools during the fall semester as a safety precaution.

Fields' request comes as Louisiana is seeing a sharp uptick in confirmed cases of COVID-19 and patients who are hospitalized with complications from the disease. More than 3,200 Louisiana residents have died from COVID-19, according to the state health department, a number that grew by 23 on Tuesday.

Montana

BILLINGS — A Billings nursing home said 58 residents and staff have tested positive for the coronavirus and the facility has been put under quarantine, as Montana on Tuesday reported its highest daily total of confirmed infections since the pandemic began.

Residents and staff of Canyon Creek Memory Care Community were tested July 3 after a staff member recently tested positive, said spokesman Chase Salyers with Koelsch Communities, the Washington state company that runs the facility.

Two of the 43 residents who tested positive were hospitalized, and the rest remain at Canyon Creek. The facility has 55 residents, including those with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of memory loss, and 56 staff members.

Tennessee

NASHVILLE — As Nashville's coronavirus cases continue to surge, a city official on Tuesday called on the mayors of surrounding counties to require masks in public, saying the problem needs to be addressed regionally.

"There has been an increase in cases among all our neighboring

counties," Mayor John Cooper said in a Tuesday news conference. Cooper singled out Rutherford, which has more cases than Hamilton, home to the state's fourth-largest city, and Sumner, which Cooper said has "recently been forced to place ambulances on diversion due to a record number of hospitalizations."

Nashville issued a mask order June 29, but surrounding counties, which don't have their own health departments, were not allowed to issue their own orders until Friday, when Gov. Bill Lee granted them that power.

Vermont

Vermont announced Tuesday mandatory guidance and health protocols for colleges and universities to follow — including a health safety contract for staff and students to sign — as they reopen amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The guidance, developed by a task force, includes initial quarantines for students arriving from certain areas of the country, testing of all students and staff at the start of the school year and the use of face coverings while around others in public. The density of classrooms and dining halls must also be reduced.

The academic calendar will also likely change with students going home at Thanksgiving and returning later in the spring, said former Norwich University President Richard Schneider, who chairs the task force.

Students and staff face discipline if they do not abide by the signed contract, which states that they are willing to follow the state's and institutions' virus-related restrictions. Schools will enforce the contracts and students who violate major health components shall be immediately removed from campus for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Cases in Australia spike as Serbia erupts in violence

Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia — The reimposition of coronavirus lockdown measures in Serbia touched off violent clashes in the capital that left at least 60 police and protesters hurt amid renewed warnings that the virus is still gathering pace.

Australia grappled with a COVID-19 spike in the city of Melbourne that prepared Wednesday for a second lockdown to contain the virus' spread. Melbourne's virus woes contrasted sharply with other areas of the country that have been reporting low or no daily infections.

Africa surpassed the half million mark of coronavirus infections according to figures released Wednesday by the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. South Africa reported another day of more than 10,000 confirmed cases.

There's no way to know the real number of confirmed virus cases among Africa's 1.3 billion people as its 54 countries continue to face a serious shortage of testing materials for the virus.

In Serbia, angry protesters spilled out in the streets of Belgrade and tried to storm parliament after health officials reported the highest single-day death toll of 13 amid 299 new COVID-19 cases. Protesters hurled rocks, bottles and other objects and set fire to five police vehicles while video footage of the clashes showed police beating up some demonstrators.

Serbia President Aleksandar Vukic's concession that easing virus restrictions too soon possibly led to an infection spike recast the global dilemma of when to open up and by how much without igniting another virus flare-up.

Belgrade's virus resurgence reflected a general trend in the Balkans where infections are keeping a high trajectory. In Albania, 50-70 new cases are reported every day — many times over the daily number of infections reported during the country's lockdown through March and April.



Dario Voznic/AP

Serbian police officers disperse protesters in front of the parliament building in Belgrade, Serbia, on Wednesday. Thousands of people protested the Serbian president's announcement that a lockdown will be reintroduced after the country reported its highest single-day death toll from the coronavirus Tuesday.

Authorities in the Australian state of Victoria announced another 134 coronavirus cases in the latest 24 hours, down from a daily record 191 cases Tuesday.

The rest of Australia recorded 13 cases, including three Melbourne-linked infections, in the national capital Canberra. The Canberra infections are the first recorded there in almost a month.

In the U.S., daily virus infections are nearly double the country's previously high baseline with rates surging in the South and West.

The World Health Organization's

emergencies chief, Dr. Michael Ryan, said the coronavirus is continuing to gain pace globally with daily reported cases rising to 200,000 — double the number of cases reported in April and May. Ryan warned that although the number of COVID-19 deaths appeared to be stable now, he warned that a spike in fatalities could soon follow.

7 US troops test positive after arriving in South Korea

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — Seven U.S. service members tested positive for the coronavirus after traveling from the United States to South Korea in recent weeks, the military said Wednesday, raising its total number of cases to 54.

The announcement reflects the delicate balance faced by U.S. Forces Korea as it seeks to prevent the virus' spread while continuing to bring new personnel to the peninsula.

All arrivals from abroad must undergo rigid testing and quaran-

tine procedures aimed at containing any new cases.

"Since testing positive, all of the service members have been moved to an isolation facility designated for confirmed COVID-19 cases on Camp Humphreys or Osan Air Base," USFK said in a statement, referring to the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

Two of the service members initially tested negative upon arrival last month but then received positive results in the second test required before exiting the mandatory two-week quarantine, USFK said.

One of them arrived June 21

at Incheon International Airport on a commercial flight, while the other arrived June 24 at Osan Air Base via a government-chartered flight known as the Patriot Express.

Three others received positive results on their initial tests after arriving at Incheon on commercial flights July 2, Monday and Wednesday, respectively, the command said.

Two tested positive soon after landing at Osan on the Patriot Express on Saturday, it added.

With the new cases, USFK said it has 14 active-duty troops isolated with the respiratory virus as most of the other patients have

recovered.

Health authorities determined limited contact tracing was needed since all passengers on the flights had to be tested and quarantined for two weeks. The quarantine rooms occupied before the patients were transferred to the isolation unit were thoroughly cleaned, USFK said.

More than half of the cases reported by the command — 30 — have been overseas arrivals. Only 24 people affiliated with USFK were confirmed to be infected locally — the most recent on April 14.

"USFK continues to maintain a robust combined defense posture

to protect [South Korea] against any threat or adversary while maintaining prudent preventive measures to protect the force," it said.

The military eased anti-coronavirus restrictions for most bases on the divided peninsula in May after months of near lockdown as South Korea struggled with the pandemic.

The South has largely flattened the number of new cases daily, although it continues to suffer from cluster outbreaks and imported infections.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @kinggamel

Okinawa reports first off-base virus case since April

By DAVE ORNAUER AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Okinawa prefecture reported its first new coronavirus case involving a Japanese person since April 30, a prefectural official said Wednesday.

The unidentified male in his 40s lives in the Chubu area in the central part of Okinawa, near Camps Foster and Lester, Kadena Air Base and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

The case is not connected to several others reported Tuesday at MCAS Futenma, which was locked down for four hours as a result of the outbreak.

"I believe this individual contracted the virus inside of Okinawa prefecture as he traveled to mainland Japan recently,"

the official said. It's customary for some Okinawa government officials to speak on condition of anonymity.

"At this moment, we are doing our best to find any individuals who had close contact with this patient," the official said.

Okinawa had reported 146 cases and seven deaths before Tuesday. The prefecture started reopening for business May 14 after nearly a month of closures due to coronavirus concerns.

Marine Corps Installations Pacific ordered MCAS Futenma personnel to shelter in place at 2:49 p.m. Tuesday after "several" people there tested positive for the coronavirus.

Marine officials "called the prefectural government around 5 p.m. on Tuesday to tell us that the individuals who contracted the coronavirus work at the same place

and those individuals live on base," another Okinawa prefectural official told Stars and Stripes by phone Wednesday.

All of the Futenma cases and their close contacts were isolated, according to a Marine Corps statement Tuesday evening. The source of the infection was not known at the time.

It was not immediately known if the individuals "had any close contacts with local nationals who work on the base or people off base," the prefectural official said.

The Marine Corps declined to specify the number of positive cases or provide background information on them "due to operational security concerns," Marine spokesman 1st Lt. Ryan Bruce said in an email to Stars and Stripes.

Marine Forces Japan bases remain under a "moderate" risk of coronavirus

spreading, according to Bruce's email.

Marine Forces Japan is constantly evaluating its health-protection restrictions "and will make a determination on a change in measures after close consultation with Navy health professionals," he said. "We are taking all prudent measures to prevent further spread of COVID-19 to our forces, employees, families and Okinawan neighbors."

The prefectural official said Okinawa is not seeking to restrict U.S. military personnel on the island. "We just want them to give us information to trace their action history and close contacts," he said.

ornaauer.dave@stripes.com
Twitter: @DaveOrnaauer
ichihashi.aya@stripes.com
Twitter: @ayaichihashi

NATION

Spike in violence is latest challenge for cities

By TOM HAYS AND COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Still reeling from the coronavirus pandemic and street protests over the police killing of George Floyd, exhausted cities around the nation are facing yet another challenge: a surge in shootings that has left dozens dead, including young children.

The spike defies easy explanation, experts say, pointing to the toxic mix of issues facing America in 2020: an unemployment rate not seen in a generation, a pandemic that has killed more than 130,000 people, stay-at-home orders, rising anger over police brutality, intense stress, even the weather.

"I think it's just a perfect storm of distress in America," said Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms after a weekend of bloodshed in her city.

Jerry Ratcliffe, a Temple University criminal justice professor and host of the "Reducing Crime" podcast, put it more bluntly: "Anybody who thinks they can disentangle all of this probably doesn't know what they're talking about."

President Donald Trump has seized on the violence for political gain, accusing Democrats of being weak and suggesting the crime wave is driven by recent protests calling for racial justice, police reform and drastic cuts in law enforcement funding.

"Law and order are the building blocks of the American dream, but if anarchy prevails, this dream comes crumbling down," White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said last week.

Police officials in New York City and elsewhere say the recent bloodshed has shown there are consequences to some reforms they see as misguided, particularly on bail reform, enacted before the protests happened but exacerbated by the moment.

Emboldened criminals feel "that the cops can't do anything anymore, that no one likes the police, that they can get away with things, that it's safe to carry a gun out on the street," New York Police Department Chief Terence Monahan said this week.

Monahan's remarks came after a holiday weekend that saw a wave of shootings leaving 10 dead. Through Sunday, shootings were up more than 53% — to 585 — so far this year.

The recent spasm of violence was cap-



ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ, CHICAGO TRIBUNE/AP

An officer investigates the scene of a shooting in Chicago on July 5. Cities across the nation are seeing a surge in shootings, killing dozens of people.

tured in a New York Post headline about a crime-ravaged city crying out for help. It was nearly identical to one that ran 30 years ago — when there were more than 2,000 murders a year. But crime has been declining for more than a decade — there were about 300 last year.

Crime has spiked in other major cities, too. In Dallas, violent crime increased more than 14% from April to June. In Philadelphia, homicides were up 20% for the week ending July 5 over last year at this time. In Atlanta, 31 people were shot over the weekend, five fatally, compared with seven shootings and one killing over the same week in 2019.

Some police unions say officers just aren't doing their jobs over fear of being charged with crime.

Bottoms, a Democrat, lashed out after an 8-year-old girl was shot and killed near the Atlanta Wendy's restaurant where Rayshard Brooks died three weeks earlier in a confrontation with police who were later charged criminally.

"That's an important movement that's happening," she said at a news conference. "But this random, wild, wild West shoot 'em up because you can has got to stop."

Trump's Georgia campaign claimed Atlanta was a "war zone" brought on after Bottoms' "lost control of the city after what started out as peaceful protests, quickly turned violent. In a flurry of anti-police activity."

The Trump campaign also launched a \$250,000 ad blitz Sunday on Facebook and Twitter, claiming "violent crime has EXPLODED" as protesters call for cuts to police departments across the country. The ad features an empty police station with a ringing phone that sends a caller to an answering machine, which says the estimated wait time for police help is five days.

The video ends by flashing the words, "You won't be safe in Joe Biden's America."

Biden's campaign said the Trump approach was just another distraction from his "inaction and mismanagement" of the coronavirus crisis.

"While Donald Trump searches for the latest cultural issue to drive people apart and celebrates Independence Day with new, race-baiting rhetoric, Americans are contracting coronavirus at alarming rates, and there is still no coherent national plan to address it," said T.J. Ducklo, a spokes-

man for the presumptive Democratic nominee.

Trump's messaging went beyond the ad campaign. Donald Trump Jr. shared on Facebook a conservative-created meme of 11-year-old Davon McNeal, who was shot to death in Washington during a cookout over the weekend.

"Davon was murdered after a string of BLM (Black Lives Matter) violence on the Fourth of July," it read.

The shooting was not connected to Black Lives Matter, the movement behind many of the protests against police brutality. The boy had been at a family oriented anti-violence cookout Saturday, but he left to get a phone charger from his aunt's house when he was struck by gunmen in a sedan.

Tracie Keesee, a longtime police official in Denver and New York who co-founded the Center for Policing Equity, said it's important to get answers on what is driving the crime, whether it's drugs, domestic violence or poverty. She cautioned against broad-stroke generalizations.

"You have to get into the numbers," she said.

Reform advocates say blaming a spike on the necessary push for police reform ignores the root causes of crime.

Government officials need to be thoughtful and nuanced and contextual about these things," liberal New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson told radio station WNYC this week.

To link the shootings to reforms, Johnson added, gives "an inaccurate picture of what criminal justice reform is about and is just demonizing the moment that we're in and not talking about what brought us here today."

Like New York, Chicago had already seen an increase in homicides and shootings in the first part of the year. But while the violence tapered off in New York under stay-at-home orders, shootings in Chicago remained steady, likely because of gang warfare, said Wesley Skogan, who studies crime at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University.

Seventeen people were fatally shot in Chicago and 70 wounded, one of the bloodiest holiday weekends in memory there.

Gangs "are not particularly deterred by the risks of being out there," Skogan said. "Of all the things they are likely to be worried about, COVID is way down the list."







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PACIFIC

Japan battered by more heavy rain and floods; dozens dead

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO — Pounding rain that already caused deadly floods in southern Japan was moving northeast Wednesday, battering large areas of Japan's main island, swelling more rivers, triggering mudslides and destroying houses and roads. At least 58 people died in several days of flooding.

Parts of Nagano and Gifu, including areas known for scenic mountain trails and hot springs, were flooded by massive downpours.

Public broadcaster NHK showed a swollen river gouging into its embankment and destroying a highway. In the city of Gero, the rising river was flowing just below a bridge.

Flooding and mudslides blocked parts of a main road connecting Kamikochi and Matsumoto,

two major tourist destinations in Nagano, stranding hundreds of residents and visitors, though they were believed to have safely evacuated. In neighboring Gifu, hundreds were isolated in the hot spring towns of Gero and Ontake.

In the scenic mountainous town of Takayama, several houses were hit by a mudslide, but their residents were safely rescued.

As of Wednesday morning, the death toll from the heavy rains had risen to 58, most of them from the hardest-hit Kumamoto prefecture. Four others died in Fukuoka, another prefecture on Kyushu, Japan's third-largest island.

At the peak, as many as 3.6 million people were advised to evacuate, although it wasn't mandatory and the number who sought shelter was not known. About half of the advisories had been lifted by Wednesday afternoon.



KOH HARADA, KYODO NEWS/AP

A flooded river in Kuma village, part of Kumamoto prefecture in southern Japan, killed several people and caused widespread destruction,

In places where rain has subsided, residents were busy cleaning up their homes and workplaces.

In Gero, a man washed off mud at the entrance of his riverside house despite the evacuation advisory.

"I was told to run away and my neighbors all went, but I stayed," he said. "I didn't want my house to be washed away in my absence."

In Oita, teachers at a nursery school were wiping the floor and

drying wet furniture.

"I hope we can return to normal life as soon as possible," Principal Yuko Kitaguchi told NHK.

As the rains pounded central Japan, flooding continued to affect the southern region. Search and rescue operations continued in Kumamoto, where 14 people remained missing.

Tens of thousands of army troops, police and other rescue workers mobilized from around

the country to assist. Rescue operations have been hampered by the rains, flooding, mudslides and disrupted communications.

In Kagoshima, a pickup truck was hit by a mudslide and fell into the ocean, but the driver was airlifted out with a head injury, according to Fuji Television. In another town in Oita, two brothers in their 80s were extracted alive after a mudslide hit their hillside house, NHK said.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Footbridge damaged by derailment reopens

WV HARPERS FERRY — A popular pedestrian footbridge in West Virginia is repaired and back open following a train derailment.

The footbridge crosses the Potomac River from Harpers Ferry into Maryland and draws tourists, bicyclists and hikers along the Appalachian Trail.

The footbridge is connected to a CSX span crossing the river. A CSX freight train derailed in December as it crossed the river, damaging the footbridge.

The derailment closed access to some parts of Harpers Ferry National Historic Park and the Chesapeake & Ohio National Historic Park.

Police: Jogger finds human head along road

FL ST. PETERSBURG — A Florida woman discovered a human head on the side of the road while out jogging, according to authorities.

The remains were in a grassy area between the sidewalk and the edge of the road, just west of an interstate overpass, The Tampa Bay Times reported.

Investigators could not immediately determine the person's gender or race, the newspaper quoted St. Petersburg police spokeswoman Yolanda Fernandez as saying.

Investigators said they do not think the victim died at the scene, though it was unclear how long the remains had been there, news outlets reported.

Cargo of pork roasted in a big fire

CA LAKESIDE — A big fire on a highway east of San Diego roasted its cargo of pork.

Overheated brakes ignited the truck's trailer on Interstate 8 in Lakeside, The San Diego Union-Tribune reported.

The trailer and its 41,000 pounds of pork were a total loss, the newspaper said.

Cleaning up the mess snarled traffic late into the day.

Siberia wildfire smoke reaches US states

AK ANCHORAGE — Smoke from wildfires in Siberia carried to Southcentral Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the National Weather Service said.

Strong winds pushed the smoky air into the region beginning last week from fires burning across more than 5,300 square miles of the northern Russian region, The Anchorage Daily News reported.

The wildfire smoke also has been reported in western Oregon and Canada.

Patrick Doll of the National Weather Service said cloud cover began shifting into Alaska, which may cause difficulty in determining whether the air over parts of the state has been touched by the smoke or is simply cloudy.



ERIN EGGERTON, THE (CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.) DAILY PROGRESS/AP

Special delivery

The Free Book Bus founder Sharon Stone slides books for students outside Red Hill School in North Garden, Va. Normally, book seekers would hop on the bus to find a book. Due to social distance regulations, The Free Book Bus attached a slide for hands-free pick up. Readers of all ages and languages can find books at one of the bus stops.

Sheriff: Man pulls gun after losing contest

KY FLORENCE — An arm-wrestling contest between a father and son turned violent and led to an 8-hour standoff with Kentucky deputies, authorities said.

Curtis Zimmerman, 55, was charged with wanton endangerment, news outlets reported.

Boone County Sheriff's Office Lt. Philip Ridgell said Zimmerman was intoxicated when he challenged his son to an arm-wrestling competition.

When Zimmerman lost multiple times, he became "agitated" and got into a physical fight with his son, Ridgell said.

Zimmerman grabbed a gun and fired two shots into the ceiling while his son was going upstairs, Ridgell said. No one was injured.

When authorities arrived, two family members were outside but Zimmerman refused to leave the home, leading to the standoff.

2nd man dies in 7 days at skydiving facility

NY GARDINER — A second skydiver died within seven days at a skydiving facility in Gardiner, located about 80 miles north of New York City. The New York State Police said David Richardson, 41, was at-

THE CENSUS

\$1.4M

The approximate amount a Louisiana man has been ordered to repay to eBay customers who paid him for gold bullion or coins. Randall Keith Byrd, 66, of West Monroe pleaded guilty in March to one count of wire fraud. U.S. District Judge Terry Doughty also sentenced him last week to four years in prison. According to testimony, Byrd listed gold bullion and coins which he never sent to customers, providing phony shipping and tracking information when they asked why their merchandise hadn't arrived.

tempting a "swoop landing" on July 5 when he hit the ground at high speed. He was transported to a hospital where he died.

A week earlier on June 28, William McCartin, 40, jumped out of a plane run by the same facility and was found dead without his parachute in a fire station parking lot. A state police spokesperson told the Poughkeepsie Journal it remained unclear if McCartin took the parachute off himself or if it came off as he was falling.

State police said Richardson's parachute opened properly, and the Times Herald-Record reported a police spokesperson said there is no connection between the deaths.

Vet helps save man from drowning in reservoir

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A retired veteran and former state trooper from Ne-

vada helped prevent a man from drowning at Sand Hollow Reservoir in Southeast Utah, a park official said.

Sand Hollow State Park manager Jonathan Hunt said a family was using a rope swing when a man, who was not identified, went into the water and did not resurface.

The veteran, who also was not identified, got the man to the shore and began CPR while bystanders called for help.

Park rangers who arrived at the scene took over CPR and revived the man, who was transported to a hospital.

Boater who fled storm killed by falling tree

NC CHARLOTTE — A boater who sought shelter from a storm in North Carolina was killed after being struck by a fallen tree.

The Charlotte Observer reported that the incident occurred on Mountain Island Lake near Charlotte.

Gaston County Police said that two people had fled the lake to avoid getting struck by lightning and took shelter on an uninhabited island.

A large tree uprooted and landed on one of the two people, police said. Several people were on the island at the time, and some tried to provide lifesaving care.

Pier damaged in 2016 hurricane reopens

SC MYRTLE BEACH — A South Carolina pier heavily damaged in a hurricane four years ago has finally reopened.

The Springmaid Pier at the south end of Myrtle Beach welcomed its first visitors since its rebuilding.

The 1,000-foot long pier suffered extensive damage in 2016 when Hurricane Matthew scrapped the South Carolina coast.

Crews rebuilt the pier with steel instead of wood and separated it into five sections so it would be stronger and easier to fix if damaged, said Lindsay Rice, a spokeswoman for the privately-owned structure.

From wire reports

FACES

Hall of anonymity

Versatile 'Black Monday' actress often confused with another talented but very different Regina

By CHRIS HEWITT ■ Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Even if you're a movie fan, there's a good chance you're not familiar with Regina Hall — and an even better chance you think she's Regina King.

Like the famous Bill Pullman/Bill Paxton confusion, the Reginas can baffle audiences since both are 49, toiled in crummy supporting roles for decades before breaking through in the movies, costarred with Chris Rock and flourished in prestige TV. (King has won three Emmys, for "American Crime" and "Seven Seconds," while Hall is a contender this year for "Black Monday.")

They even shared the stage at the 2018 New York Film Critics Circle awards, where Hall won the best actress trophy for "Support the Girls" and King won supporting actress for "If Beale Street Could Talk."

But unlike the laconic Pullman and Paxton, Hall

and King are strikingly different performers.

King generally plays calm, commanding people who may be marginalized by society because they are Black women, but they know who they are and are confident in their fight for what they deserve.

Hall, by contrast, has often made use of her nervous energy. From her first film role in 1999's "The Best Man," her characters are usually worried, which — since she starred in all four "Scary Movie" entries — they often have reason to be.

Hall is great at comedy and drama. She can be manic or centered. She can play smart or dumb. She can't do everything — her "Lip Sync Battle" attempt at the Weekend's "Earned It" is not great, but she comes pretty close. And, if not every Hall movie is top-notch, you can put money on her being the best thing in it, as demonstrated by the titles below.

'Shaft' (2019)

The key to this remake/reboot is Hall, as the title character's quick-witted ex. One of three films she's made with director Tim Story, this is part homage, part send-up. Anytime Samuel L. Jackson's Shaft starts to get cocky, Hall's Maya is there to remind him he is nowhere near as cool as he thinks he is.

'Support the Girls' (2018)

Hall has played her share of moms, but she's more of a figurative one in this comedy that found its niche on streaming platforms. Her Lisa is the mama bear of a Hooters-like club, working to ensure her employees aren't getting exploited by customers or management. The slice of (night)life in Andrew Bujalski's low-key movie is eye-opening, and Hall's smart performance anchors enough subplots for a Robert Altman movie.

'The Hate U Give' (2018)

The adaptation of Angie Thomas' novel will look familiar: Chaos erupts after a white cop kills an unarmed Black man. The book and movie explore shades of gray

as Starr (Amandla Stenberg), who witnessed the killing of her friend, weighs whether to come forward or stay quiet and safe. The dilemmas are meant to be messy but, while other characters debate how to do the right thing, Hall's performance centers the drama. As Starr's mother, Hall makes her character's urgent need to protect her daughter the driving focus of every minute she's on screen.

'Girls Trip' (2017)

It would be easy for an actor to get lost in a raucous comedy that stars Queen Latifah and Jada Pinkett Smith and that made Tiffany Haddish a star, especially since Hall's role, an uptight exec who is kidding herself about her stale marriage, is the quietest one. But watch how often director Malcolm Lee cuts to Hall when the others do something outrageous; they get the initial laughs, but Hall's reactions prolong them. A good sign of Hall's reliability and versatility is how often she reteams with directors — she and Lee have done four movies, with a fifth in the works.

'People Places Things' (2015)

The oddball rom-com is mostly about Jemaine Clement's char-

acter, a sad-sack graphic novelist whose wife cuckolds him. Clement is excellent, but the movie comes alive in his scenes with Hall, whose quick wit and peculiar energy are a sharp contrast to Clement's underplaying. Hall plays a Columbia professor who is set up with Clement in an observant film with one familiar problem: Needs more Hall.

'Think Like a Man' (2012)

Although she barely has a name in this surprisingly sturdy rom-com — she's "The Single Mom," one of the archetypes of the self-help book that inspired the movie — Hall gets to do a lot in "Think." Playing a woman who cautiously enters the dating world but quickly embraces it, Hall is very funny and very real.

'Scary Movie' (2000)

Hall pitches her voice slightly south of only-dogs-can-hear in this spoofy series, where her Brenda skewers the "final girl" cliché of horror movies, speaks truth to power ("Fifty Black people got beat by police today, but the whole world has to stop for one little white girl down a well?") and, more often than not, is forced to take on the serial killer bad guy.



Regina Hall, in the 2012 movie "Think Like a Man," above, and during a 2019 Television Critics Association Press Tour at top.



Mandy Moore
Los Angeles Times

Moore says ex Adams didn't deliver personal apology

By PETER SLENDORIO
New York Daily News

Mandy Moore said she has not received a private apology from her ex-husband, Ryan Adams, who recently admitted in an essay that he's "mistreated people."

"It's challenging because in many ways I feel like I've said all I want to say about him and that situation, but I find it curious that someone would make a public apology but not do it privately," Moore said Monday on the "Today" show.

Moore was one of several women who spoke out in a February 2019 report published by The New York Times about Adams' alleged manipulative behavior.

Adams, a singer-songwriter, denied the allegations at the time, but apologized in an essay published last week by the Daily Mail, without addressing any specific accusation.

"I am speaking for myself, but I have not heard from him," Moore told host Hoda Kotb on Monday. "I'm not looking for an apology necessarily, but I do find it curious that someone would do an interview about it without actually making amends privately."

Moore claimed in The New York Times' report last year that Adams would lash out at her and wrote music with her that they never went on to record.

"He would always tell me, 'You're not a real musician, because you don't play an instrument,'" Moore said at the time.

In his new essay, Adams said there are "no words to express how bad I feel about the ways I've mistreated people throughout my life and career. All I can say is that I'm sorry," Adams wrote. "It's that simple. That I'm sorry of isolation and reflection made me realize that I needed to make significant changes."

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EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stars.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stars.com
Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stars.com
Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stars.com
Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stars.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast
Erik Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
slavin.erik@stars.com
+410631.3615.9350, DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific
Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stars.com
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380, DSN (315)227.7380

Washington
Joseph Caccioli, Washington Bureau Chief
caccioli.joseph@stars.com
+1.202.886-0033
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stars.com

CONTRIBUTOR

Mideast
Robert Reisman, Mideast Contribution Manager
reisman.robert.na@gmail.com
xsscussion@stars.com
DSN (314)583.9111

Europe
Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stars.com
managerservices@stars.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090, DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific
Marl Mori, Customer Help@stars.com
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington
Tel: (+1)202.886.0003
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050

Reader letters
letters@stars.com

Additional contacts
stars.com/contactus

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OPINION

Lincoln knew change is a series of steps

By DAVID VON DREHLE
The Washington Post

Abraham Lincoln's position on slavery was unambiguous. "I am naturally anti-slavery," he declared. "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel." His position was sufficiently clear that legislatures in seven states voted to leave the Union when Lincoln was elected president (four more soon joined them), because he represented a major shift in the federal government's stance on the issue.

That Americans still debate his views — one respected author argued in a book not long ago that Lincoln "detested" abolitionists and "wanted nothing to do with them" — is not our fault, however. Lincoln was cagey in his actions and sometimes deliberately misleading with his words. We know this was intentional because the man who wrote the Gettysburg Address was unsurpassed in his ability to be definitive when he wished to be.

His deliberate ambiguity served two goals: to win the presidency in a country much more ambivalent than he was himself, and to bind both ends of the Union coalition — three slave states on one end of the spectrum and such visionaries as Frederick Douglass and Charles Sumner on the other end — long enough to crush the Confederate rebellion.

Lincoln's strategems were on display in his famous (infamous?) reply to newspaper editor Horace Greeley in August 1862. Displaying an apparent and appalling callousness, Lincoln wrote that his sole priority was to "save the Union" — whether that meant freeing all slaves, or freeing no slaves, or freeing some and not others. But consider the context: Lincoln knew as he

wrote those lines that he was going to issue his Emancipation Proclamation and that this would be hugely controversial, possibly shattering the Union. He used Greeley as an avenue to reach conservative Northern voters and educate them in the necessary linkage between ending slavery and winning the war. With cool pragmatism, he laid the foundation for a step that, in the opinion of the great abolitionist Sumner, put Lincoln "so far above human approach that human envy cannot reach him."

And yet, would Lincoln have been still more admirable if he had been less doggy about his views and less strategically incremental with his policies? If he had said and done the most morally pure thing possible in every circumstance, regardless of public opinion? Maybe so. But he would never have become president. Someone else, someone less politically adept, would have taken office in 1861. What might have followed is impossible to know.

Great leaders lead us to high ideals, but in democracies they are rarely idealists themselves. Let me rephrase that: Great leaders in democracies cannot be exclusively idealistic. They must also be effective, and to be effective they must be elected. When we build memorials to them or carve their faces into a mountain, we have their practical achievements in mind — and the work that remains to be done.

Like the others on Mount Rushmore, Lincoln doesn't need President Donald Trump's blustery defense and hagiographic eulogy so much as he could use more nuanced and informed examination. The best memorial to Lincoln is the one that stimulates, rather than squelch, critical thinking. They direct our gaze forward as well as back.

Lincoln, for example, drew purpose from Thomas Jefferson. He knew perfectly well

the hypocrisy involved in owning slaves while hypocritizing human equality. Jefferson knew his own hypocrisy and trembled to "reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever." That human paradox, the reach that exceeded Jefferson's grasp, gave Lincoln his life's work. As he pledged at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Lincoln intended to square the laws of the nation with the promise of Jefferson's declaration, or to destroy it.

In the end, you could say, he did both. What he failed to do, and even seemed to dread attempting, was to eradicate the prejudice and tribalism that made slavery thinkable in the first place. His attention to public opinion was so acute that he despaired of the possibility of a truly just and equal multiracial society.

Any monument to Lincoln, fully understood, points to his unfulfilled mission. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. understood that. That's why he climbed the steps of Lincoln's memorial in Washington on a hot August day in 1963 to speak of a dream still to be realized. In his imperfections and inadequacies, Lincoln left important work still to be done.

The past is of no use to anyone except in service to the future. If, some blessed day, our nation fulfills its every aspiration, those distant descendants can freeze the moment and reverse as they please. Until that time, our monuments must, of necessity, honor the imperfect and the incomplete. Keep those that goad us forward; remove those that lure us backward. Neither our democratic president, nor vandals in the night, should stifle the inquiry into which monuments are which.

David Von Drehle is a Washington Post columnist. He is the author of "Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year."

To judge monuments, think about their meaning

By DOYLE MCMAUS
Los Angeles Times

At Gettysburg, where the bloodiest and most decisive battle of the Civil War occurred, no fewer than 1,320 monuments are scattered across the rolling Pennsylvania landscape. Some memorialize Union generals and their men; others remember Confederates.

One is especially poignant: the Maryland monument, which lists both Union and Confederate units from one divided state. It depicts two wounded men, one from each army, propping each other up. There's a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, surveying the battlefield on horseback, and another of the Union commander, Gen. George G. Meade.

The Union monuments outnumber those of the Confederates, just as their armies did in 1863. It's an open-air museum, and it leaves no doubt which side won the war.

Almost 200 miles to the south, in Richmond, Va., Civil War statues were erected to convey a very different message.

Monument Avenue is the Virginia capital's grandest boulevard. Until recently, it was dominated by heroic statues of Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and others.

They are the men who lost the war — but on Monument Avenue, they appeared triumphant.

That was the point. Richmond's statues were erected more than a generation after the war ended, after white segregationists regained control of the Southern states. "The message (was) a victory narrative

about the overturning of Reconstruction and the reestablishment of white supremacy," Yale historian David W. Blight, the biographer of Frederick Douglass, wrote last week.

Now the Richmond statues are coming down. Protesters toppled Davis on June 10, the city removed Jackson, and the governor is battling in court to remove Lee.

Their removal is long overdue. By contrast, Lee's statue in Gettysburg should remain standing because its meaning is so different.

In Richmond, Lee appears dominant, his presence designed to intimidate. At Gettysburg, outnumbered by federal troops and about to lose the most important battle of his career, he appears in a more appropriate context — as history, not mythology.

The distinction is not only whom the statue shows, but what message it conveys.

Monuments to George Washington and Thomas Jefferson celebrate their wisdom in founding the republic, not their flaws, chief among them their ownership of slaves. We honor them despite those flaws, not because of them.

Statues of Christopher Columbus pose a tougher question. Are we honoring him for his intrepid navigating or because he opened the Americas to European colonization?

The good news about this summer's protests is that they've forced us to confront our history more squarely — not merely the mythologized version most of us received.

Case in point: Army bases. Until last month, how many of us knew that 10 U.S. Army bases in the South were named for Confederate officers who fought against the United States? The names were usually

given to placate white politicians.

The strangest is Fort Bragg, N.C., named for Braxton Bragg, perhaps the least competent general in Lee's army. One of his officers called him "cruel, yet without courage ... crafty, yet without strategy." He resigned his commission after losing the Battle of Chattanooga.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper says he's open to changes, but President Donald Trump has declared the Army bases' names a matter of high principle. The only principle involved is his relentless drive to narrow down his conservative base by pushing a statue war against Black Lives Matter.

The president waded back into the battle at Mount Rushmore last week, charging spuriously that protesters against racism "are determined to tear down every statue, symbol and memory of our heritage."

This argument has a long way to go. Since the death of George Floyd, 22 Confederate statues have been downed — but 748 are still standing, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

And most of the public agrees with the protesters, not with the president. A Quinnipiac University poll last month found that a small majority, 52%, think the statues should come down — a notable change in public opinion.

The protests have not only started useful conversations; they appear to be building a new national majority in favor of change.

Those Confederate generals should be hoisted off their pedestals and put where they belong: in a museum or on a battlefield, not in a position of honor.

Doyle McMaus is a Washington columnist for the Los Angeles Times and director of the journalism program at Georgetown University.

OPINION

Biden is bringing back the front-porch campaign

By HENRY OLSEN
The Washington Post

Republicans keep hoping and expecting that former Vice President Joe Biden will have to leave his basement and hit the campaign trail sometime soon. Don't be surprised, though, if that doesn't happen. Biden looks to be trying to run a 21st-century version of the standard 19th-century "front porch campaign" — and it might work.

Presidential candidates rarely actively campaigned in the 19th century. The lack of a national railroad system made travel too arduous for candidates before 1850. Even after that, it took days for trains to travel between major cities, and the lack of any means of mass communication besides partisan newspapers meant any candidates would exhaust themselves for little to no impact. Many aspiring presidents therefore did what made sense: They stayed at home and let the crowds come to them.

Republican campaigns were the experts at staging these efforts. They would treat each day the way modern consultants do, selecting a largely favorable audience and designing a speech to make a point relevant to the audience. Workers would hear about tariffs while Black voters would hear about emancipation. Reporters would camp out at the candidate's house, transcribe the words, take the photos and send their missives to their local papers via telegraph. Much like a rally or photo op today, front-porch campaigns could reach the entire nation with a targeted, clear message.

This method reached its apex in the 1896 election. Fiery populist William Jennings Bryan, a 36-year-old former Democratic member of Congress from Nebraska, had unexpectedly captured his party's nomination with his immortal "Cross of Gold" speech at the convention. He then launched into one of the most unprecedented national barnstorming campaigns, speaking to millions of people in hundreds of cities. The Republican nominee, William McKinley, stayed at home in Canton, Ohio, as his



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, center, speaks to Stacie Ritter, right, and her son, Jan, during a meeting with families who have benefited from the Affordable Care Act, in Lancaster, Pa., last month.

well-financed campaign brought the voters to him. McKinley won the largest share of the popular vote of any candidate since 1872 and trounced Bryan by a 271-to-176 margin in the Electoral College.

Biden's campaign has unwittingly become an homage to the McKinley model. Biden rarely ventures from his basement, instead speaking to supporters via carefully curated events on social media or elsewhere on the internet. He delivers a message designed to resonate with that group's priorities and takes softball questions from his fans. He has occasionally taken questions from the broader media or subjected himself to tough interviews, but he has mainly stayed out of the limelight and let attention focus on the populist pugilist in the White House.

This "less is more" approach has been spectacularly successful. Biden led President Donald Trump by 6.3 points on March 11, the day after he effectively clinched the



ALEX BRANDON/AP

President Donald Trump watches a flyover by the U.S. Navy Blue Angels at Mount Rushmore National Memorial on Friday near Keystone, S.D. His speech at the event was largely scripted with little improvisation.

nomination by beating Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., in five of six states. Today, Biden leads by 8.7 points; why should he abandon something that's worked so well?

Trump will try to lure Biden out of the basement by running a modern version of Bryan's campaign. He'll crisscross the country by plane, speaking wherever he can muster the large crowds that energize and fuel him. He might prefer the large indoor rallies where he can deliver his trademark, semi-spontaneous remarks, but he might be better served by more outdoor events like last Friday's at Mount Rushmore, which feature scripted speeches with little improvisation. He won't lack for locations if he chooses to run as a defender of U.S. history: Imagine presidential addresses at Fort Sumter, Valley Forge and a plethora of other hallowed sites. He'll probably draw large crowds from people bored from sitting at home and Republicans frustrated with the woke mob's desecration of

American idols.

None of that will sway Biden, however, unless his share of the vote starts to drop in the polls. Biden has been at or above 48% in the polls almost all year, a level Hillary Clinton really only broke for a substantial amount of time during a six-week period in late March and April 2016 as Trump battled to clinch the GOP nod. Trump can close the gap with Biden by rallying some soft supporters back to his camp, but if Biden stays above 48%, his staff will justifiably feel they have the upper hand. There's no reason to risk their aged candidate's health or increase the risk of damaging gaffes by falling for Trump's bait.

Democrats once urged their man to "Give 'em hell, Harry!" Today they'll shout with equal vigor, "Stay at home, Joe!" Expect him to gratefully take advice.

Henry Olsen is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

ICE policy limits what international students do for America

By MARGARITA KONAEP
Special to The Washington Post

American colleges contemplate how to resume classes in the middle of a pandemic and students consider whether they want to enroll at all in the fall, Immigration and Customs Enforcement made the choice even more wrenching for international students. If their schools go fully online, ICE declared, these students must either transfer to a school where they can attend classes in person or return to their home countries to take their courses remotely.

If this policy had been enacted when I was an international student, it would have ruined my professional and personal life. But in addition to the personal tragedies that will follow this policy, the rule will hurt the financial viability of U.S. higher education, hinder American innovation and stunt the country's competitiveness on the global stage.

I was 17 in 2003 when I arrived at Brandeis University as an international student from Israel. By 2016, I had also earned a masters from Georgetown University and a doctorate from the University of Notre Dame, receiving an education and experience of unparalleled quality made possible by an F1 student visa. I

also taught, worked, volunteered, traveled, made friends, fell in love and built a life in the United States.

Asking students to attend classes remotely from their home countries is no substitute for this experience — if they are even able to access their classes at all.

Time differences and unreliable or uneven access to broadband Internet in countries such as Pakistan, Nigeria and Bangladesh may make attending classes regularly nearly impossible. For students going back to undemocratic countries, participation in open discussions typical to a U.S. liberal arts education can be dangerous. China, for example, has been the largest source country of international students in the United States. There is little doubt that the online activities of returning students would be closely monitored by a government infamous for its Internet surveillance and censorship.

International students aren't the only ones who would lose out if they are put in a position that might make them reconsider their enrollment in U.S. institutions. According to the 2019 Open Doors Report on International Education, there are more than 1 million international students in the United States. These students typically pay full tuition, which subsidizes the costs of enrolling more U.S. students. For pub-

lic colleges and universities, the revenue generated from international students also helps moderate the effects of federal and state education budget cuts. This policy may force schools such as San Jose State, where international students account for nearly 11% of the student body, to choose between what they believe is safe and their bottom lines. How many U.S. students will have to defer enrollment or take on more student debt because of this ICE policy?

It isn't only universities that would feel the gaps in their budgets: In 2018, international students contributed \$45 billion to the U.S. economy through consumption and federal, state and local taxes. Small college towns and cities reliant on revenue from the student population would be hit the hardest if international students — who are more likely to continue living in the areas where their schools are based while learning remotely — are forced to leave.

This economic dynamic has been at risk for some time, and ICE's decision could accelerate the downward spiral. While the number of international students enrolled in U.S. schools has continued to rise, the rate of that increase has slowed because of high tuition costs, visa processing delays, restrictions on work after graduation, and increased competition from universities in Canada and Europe. But the pandemic

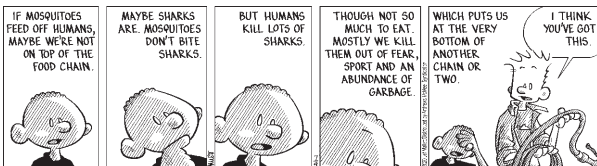
contributed to what the American Council on Education predicted to be a 25% decline in enrollment for the upcoming academic year — even before ICE announced this new restriction.

ICE's new policy could also undermine U.S. ability to compete on the international stage. The United States' excellent higher education institutions — and their ability to attract international talent — are a strategic asset given that countries such as China and Russia often struggle to retain their "best and brightest." Nearly half of international students in the United States are pursuing education in STEM fields, making them indispensable to American scientific and technological innovation.

Though I was born in the Soviet Union and grew up in Israel, where my family moved to escape poverty, growing criminality and anti-Semitism, I am writing this column from my home in Washington, because that F1 visa I received so long ago. Forcing international students to upend their schooling and professional growth, or to choose between their health or their education, doesn't just hurt them. It weakens America.

Margarita Konaep specializes in military applications of artificial intelligence, Russian military innovation and urban warfare in the Middle East, Russia and Eurasia.

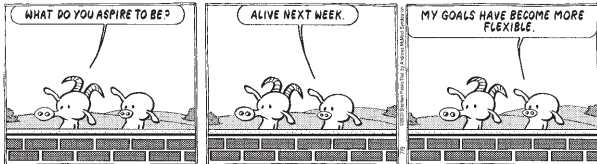
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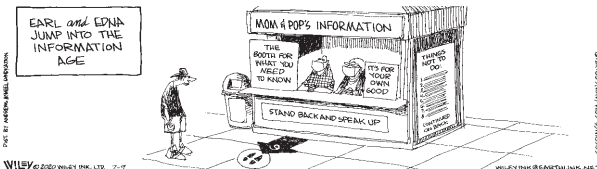
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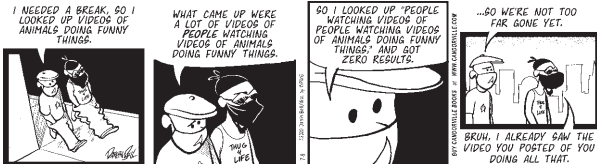
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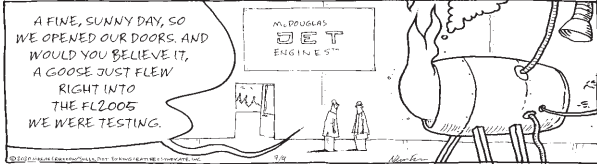
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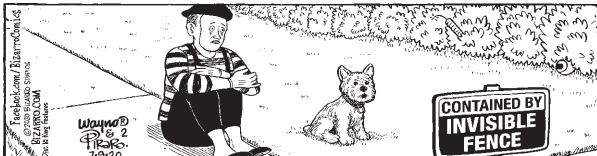
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



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Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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54							55			56

ACROSS

- Carson's predecessor
- Curly cabbage
- River blocker
- Summit
- "American —"
- Pub order
- Imaginary utopia
- Candied veggie
- Submitted by mail
- "Frasier" pooch
- Firefighter's need
- Upstairs
- Scoundrels
- Web bit
- Feeble
- That girl
- Egg (Pref.)
- Mil. address
- Twistable cookie
- Heavy weight
- Iowa city
- Knight wear
- Pacino of "The Irishman"
- "The Lion King" lion
- Goliaths
- Mahal preceder
- Fantasy
- Previously
- Cash advance
- Painter Joan
- Short do

- "May It Be" singer
- Trudge

DOWN

- Cushions
- Ranch measure
- Prayer ender
- Lariats
- Pottery oven
- Nabokov novel
- Chaney of horror films
- Church leader
- Reverie
- Jai —
- Viral phenomenon
- Blend
- Part of DJIA
- Party gift
- Japanese noodle
- Comedian Margaret
- Lingus
- Ideal occupation
- Dorothy's dog
- Mimic
- Decks in the ring
- Globe
- Frightens
- Syrup flavor
- Succor
- Wild guess
- Shakespearean villain
- Ms. Rowlands
- Astronaut Armstrong
- Poi base
- Urban haze
- Charged bit
- Salary

Answer to Previous Puzzle

P	T	A	S	F	G	H	T	R	U	E
I	S	N	T	R	O	O	H	O	L	A
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Deals

Tuesday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
CLEVELAND BROWNS — Signed T. J. Edrick Willis Jr.

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
National League
MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Agreed to terms with OF Garrett Mitchell on a minor league contract.
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Signed RHP R.J. Dabovich to a minor league contract.
AMERICAN LEAGUE
BOSTON RED SOX — Signed 2B Nick Yorke to a minor league contract.

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
DENVER NUGGETS — Named Calvin Booth as General Manager.

COLLEGE
TENNESSEE — Promoted Ashley Smith to Assistant Athletic Director for Player Relations.

Baseball

MLB exhibition schedule

Saturday, July 18
Philadelphia at Washington
N.Y. Yankees at N.Y. Mets
Sunday, July 19
Baltimore at Philadelphia
O.L. Mets at N.Y. Yankees
Chicago White Sox at Chicago Cubs
Arizona at L.A. Dodgers
Monday, July 20
Washington at N.Y. Yankees
Washington at Baltimore
Chicago Cubs at Chicago White Sox
Arizona at L.A. Dodgers
L.A. Angels at San Diego
Tuesday, July 21
Baltimore at Washington
Detroit at Cincinnati
Colorado at Texas
L.A. Angels at L.A. Dodgers
Wednesday, July 22
Detroit at Cincinnati
Minnesota at Chicago Cubs
Colorado at Texas
Milwaukee at Chicago White Sox
San Diego at L.A. Angels

Pro soccer

NWSL Challenge Cup

At Herriman Utah
Saturday, June 27
North Carolina Courage 2, Portland Thorns 1
Washington Spirit 2, Chicago Red Stars 1
Tuesday, June 30
Houston Dash 3, Utah Royals 3
O.L. Reign 0, Sky Blue 0
Wednesday, July 1
Portland Thorns 0, Chicago Red Stars 0
N.C. Courage 2, Washington Spirit 0
Thursday, July 4
Utah Royals 1, Sky Blue 0
Houston Dash 2, O.L. Reign 0
Sunday, July 5
N.C. Courage 1, Chicago Red Stars 0
Portland Thorns 1, Washington Spirit 1
Wednesday's games
Utah Royals vs. O.L. Reign
Sky Blue vs. Houston Dash
Sunday's games
Washington Spirit vs. Houston Dash
Chicago Red Stars vs. Utah Royals
Monday, July 13
O.L. Reign vs. Portland Thorns
Sky Blue vs. Portland Thorns
Quarterfinals
Friday, July 17-Saturday, July 18
Teams TBD
Semifinals
Wednesday, July 22
Quarterfinal winners
Championship
Sunday, July 26
Semifinal winners

AP spotlight

July 9
1887 — Charles Comiskey of the St. Louis Browns becomes the first major leaguer to be paid for a product endorsement. The first baseman and manager is spokesman for Weiss's Penetrating Oil.
1922 — Johnny Weissmuller is the first to swim the 100-meter freestyle under 1 minute as he breaks Duke Kahanamoku's world record with a time of 58.6 seconds.
1966 — Jack Nicklaus wins the British Open at 212 at Muirfield in Glen Sarazen, Ben Hogan and Gary Player as the only men to win the four majors.

IHF encouraged
by NHL's potential
return to Olympics

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

International Ice Hockey Federation chief Rene Fasel said he is encouraged after learning the NHL's pending labor deal opens the possibility of the world's best players returning to the Olympics.

Aside from the uncertainty raised by the coronavirus pandemic, Fasel said he doesn't foresee any major stumbling blocks that could derail negotiations leading up to the 2022 Beijing Games.

"No, I don't think there's a deal-breaker," he said Tuesday. "There are a lot of challenges. But I think in principle, I would say the news that that's in the CBA, for me and especially international hockey, is very good news."

Fasel spoke a day after the NHL and NHL Players' Association tentatively agreed to extend the collective bargaining agreement for four years, which would run through the 2025-26 season. The NHLPA executive board approved the deal Tuesday night, setting the stage for a full player vote for ratification and the return of hockey this summer.

A person with direct knowledge of the agreement told the AP it includes a provision that would allow NHL players to compete at the next two Winter Games, including the 2026 Olympics in

Italy. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the contents of the CBA were not released.

The league participated in five consecutive Olympics before skipping the 2018 Games in South Korea.

In order to return, the NHL and its players would first have to resolve various outstanding issues — including health insurance, travel costs and marketing rights — with the IIHF and the International Olympic Committee.

Travel costs alone to Pyeongchang two years ago were projected to be \$15 million, which the IOC refused to pay. The NHL was also denied control of using Olympic game footage to promote the league and players. Another concern was weighing the benefits of shutting down the regular season for two weeks only to have Olympic games being played in the early morning hours in North America due to the 14-hour time difference; a similar time difference would be present for 2022.

Fasel acknowledged the NHL's concerns and said he was encouraged after the parties had what he called "a very positive meeting" in New York in early February. Follow-up discussions were placed on hold due to the pandemic.

"We didn't give up after Pyeongchang. We understood the



Julie Jacobson/AP

The United States' Joe Pavelski, left, and Canada's Sidney Crosby go after a puck during the first period of the men's gold medal game at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. International Ice Hockey Federation chief Rene Fasel said he is encouraged upon learning the NHL's tentatively-agreed-to labor deal opens the possibility of the league allowing its players to return to Olympic competition.

situation, how it was at that time. No bad feelings," he said. "We really hope it will come in '22, and we are ready to work and find a solution."

The NHL and union have declined to discuss the proposed CBA until it is approved, which could happen as early as Friday. Carolina Hurricanes veteran forward Justin Williams called the Olympic proposal "really attractive."

"I just think it's great for the game of hockey to be able to showcase the best players," Williams said. "The Olympics are a special event in itself, but having NHL players there, even as actual players, we love to see the best on best. That's pretty special."

USA Hockey executive director Pat Kelleher said he was thrilled by the possibility of being able to put together a team with NHL

players, which could include rising young stars such as Auston Matthews, Jack Eichel, Johnny Gaudreau and Seth Jones.

"It's exciting to consider the team of Americans that could represent our country in Beijing, and we applaud the efforts of the NHL and the NHLPA in making this a possibility," Kelleher said. "The NHL had tampered down the chances of returning to Olympic play."

"At this point in time, we believe that the negatives outweigh the positives," deputy commissioner Bill Daly said following the February meeting in New York.

NHLPA executive director Don Fehr had a different take on talks with the IOC and IIHF, saying: "The impression I had coming out of the meeting was there ought to be a way to get this done to everybody's satisfaction."

MLS, down 1 team, resumes season amid virus concerns

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Major League Soccer is about to resume its season — in a state that has seen a huge spike in coronavirus infections, with one team absent because of a COVID-19 outbreak, and with plenty of worry about what will happen next.

The MLS is Back tournament started Wednesday night in Florida. The league's teams are sequestered in resorts for the duration of the World Cup-style tournament, which will be played without fans at ESPN's Wide World of Sports complex at Walt Disney World.

FC Dallas withdrew from the tournament on Monday after 10 players and a coach tested positive for the virus. On Tuesday, Nashville SC's status was thrown into doubt with five confirmed positive tests.

"It's a strange time, because on one hand, you're focused to get ready for this tournament, and get pumped up and get excited about it because the the tournament sounds a lot of fun, World Cup-style," Real Salt Lake veteran Kyle Beckerman said. "But then on the other hand you're thinking, 'Is this even going to happen?' So there's mixed emotions going on."

The tournament kicked off with a match between Orlando City and expansion Inter



Marico Jose Sanchez/AP

Major League Soccer MVP Carlos Vela did not accompany Los Angeles FC to the league's return tournament in Orlando, citing his concern for the health of his family.

Miami, a nod to the host state. Nashville was supposed to play Chicago in the second game on Wednesday night, but it has been postponed.

Additionally, Toronto FC's opening game against D.C. United was moved from Friday evening to Sunday morning. Toronto was supposed to depart on Friday, but additional testing meant the Reds didn't arrive until Monday.

MLS shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic on March 12, after the league's teams had each played two regular-season

games.

Commissioner Don Garber said that despite the disappointment about Dallas, the case shows that the league's extensive testing in its so-called bubble is working.

"We knew when we created this tournament that we would experience some impact of some of the coronavirus," Garber said. "We're all learning to live with COVID-19 and to adapt to the pandemic and to ensure that we're taking care of each other and taking care of ourselves and following the health and safety protocols as closely as possible. We also knew that when we launched this tournament, there would be an element of risk."

Also troubling are the rising cases in Florida. On Tuesday, the state reported 7,347 new infections and 380 new hospitalizations.

LAFB captain and reigning league MVP Carlos Vela opted out of the tournament, choosing to remain home with his pregnant wife and their young son. Vancouver's Freddy Montero and Lucas Cavallini also decided not to go for personal reasons.

Portland Timbers coach Giovanni Savarese said it's important to be vigilant. "I think MLS has worked very hard to try to create a safe environment," Savarese said. "But nevertheless, we still have to continue to make sure that we take always as a priority the health of the players, and making sure that they're safe."

AUTO RACING/GOLF/NFL



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Jimmie Johnson celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Clash auto race at Daytona International Speedway on Feb. 10. The seven-time NASCAR champion has twice tested negative for the coronavirus and has been cleared to race Sunday at Kentucky Speedway. Johnson missed the first race of his Cup career when he tested positive last Friday.

Johnson cleared to race

Seven-time champ has had two negative tests for coronavirus

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Seven-time NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson has twice tested negative for the coronavirus and will race Sunday at Kentucky Speedway.

Johnson missed the first race of his Cup career when he tested positive last Friday. He was tested after his wife received a positive result.

Hendrick Motorsports said Johnson tested negative on Monday and Tuesday and will return to the No. 48 Chevrolet at Kentucky. NASCAR confirmed Wednesday that Johnson has been cleared to return.

"It's been an emotional journey and I'm so happy to be back," he tweeted.

Johnson's streak of 663 consecutive starts — most among active drivers — was snapped when he didn't race Sunday at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Justin Allgaier replaced him at the Brickyard 400 and finished 37th after an early multi-car crash on pit road.

Johnson is the only NASCAR driver to test positive for the coronavirus since the series resumed racing on May 17. He is scheduled to retire from full-time NASCAR competition at the end of this season.

"My family is so grateful for the incredible love

and support we've received over the last several days," he said. "I especially want to thank Justin Allgaier for stepping in for me at Indy and being a true pro. I'm excited about getting back to business with my team this weekend."

Johnson never experienced any symptoms; his wife, Chani, was tested after suffering from what she thought was routine seasonal allergies. When she received her positive result, Johnson and their two young daughters were tested. Their daughters were negative.

Hendrick Motorsports had four crew members tested for COVID-19 after Johnson's diagnosis and all four received negative results. The No. 48 team will have its regular personnel roster for Sunday's race.

Missing the Brickyard 400 dropped Johnson to 15th in the driver standings, 46 points above the cut-off for playoffs.

Even before Johnson's diagnosis, Hendrick Motorsports had implemented strict protocols that include daily health screenings for employees working at team facilities. The organization works in split work schedules with stringent face covering and social distancing requirements. Hendrick has also increased its level of disinfecting and sanitizing all work areas.

NFL briefs

League, union haven't resolved all protocols

Associated Press

The NFL and the NFLPA haven't come to an agreement on all protocols for training camp and the preseason as the report date for teams draws closer.

The two sides finalized the protocols regarding team travel, media, and treatment response, and have also updated the facilities protocol to specifically address training camp based on recommendations from a joint committee of doctors, trainers and strength coaches formed by the league and players' union.

The league sent a 42-page memo to teams last Friday outlining those proposals. But the NFL Players Association and its president, Cleveland Browns center JC Tretter, say testing and the number of preseason games remain unresolved.

"Our normal return date for training camp is quickly approaching and we are still far from back to 'normal,'" Tretter wrote in a letter on the union's website.

"Our main concern is player safety, both in regard to preventing the virus' transmission as well as preventing injuries after an extended and historically unique layoff."

Tretter reiterated that players don't want to play any preseason games and want a 48-day training camp to help them prepare for the season and avoid injuries.

The league last week decided to cut the preseason schedule from four games to two and pushed back the start of exhibition play an extra week to give teams more time to prepare because the coro-

navirus pandemic forced the cancellation of on-field workouts.

The league previously requested that players report to camp earlier than July 28 to give them more acclimation time for strength and conditioning because they held no formal workouts or team minicamps. But the union declined.

"When we asked for a medical reason to play games that don't count in the standings during an ongoing pandemic, the NFL failed to provide one," Tretter wrote.

A league official told The Associated Press that Tretter's comments were "disheartening" to read because "we've been working in good faith."

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the league doesn't want to engage in a public dispute similar to the contentious discussions between Major League Baseball and its players' union.

"It's not constructive. We'd rather do this face to face," the person said. "The committee understood the utility of playing one or two preseason games to get players ready for game-day conditions, which you can't simulate playing against yourselves, and also to practice the protocols."

WR Jackson apologizes for anti-Semitic post

PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver DeSean Jackson has apologized after backlash for sharing anti-Semitic posts on social media over the weekend.

Jackson initially posted a screenshot of a quote widely at-



JOHN AMER/AP

Eagles wide receiver DeSean Jackson has apologized after backlash for sharing anti-Semitic posts on social media over the weekend.

"My post was definitely not intended for anybody of any race to feel any type of way, especially the Jewish community," Jackson said in a video he posted on Instagram on Tuesday.

tributed to Adolf Hitler, saying in part: "Jews will blackmail America." In another post, Jackson showed support for Louis Farrakhan, the Nation of Islam leader who is known for anti-Semitic rhetoric.

"My post was definitely not intended for anybody of any race to feel any type of way, especially the Jewish community," Jackson said in a video he posted on Instagram on Tuesday. "I post things on my story all the time, and just probably never should have posted anything Hitler did, because Hitler was a bad person, and I know that."

The NFL issued a statement, saying: "DeSean's comments were highly inappropriate, offensive and divisive and stand in stark contrast to the NFL's values of respect, equality and inclusion. We have been in contact with the team which is addressing the matter with DeSean."

Ryder Cup delayed so fans can attend

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

The Ryder Cup was postponed until 2021 in Wisconsin because of the COVID-19 pandemic that raised too much uncertainty whether the loudest event in golf could be played before spectators.

The announcement Wednesday was inevitable and had been in the works for weeks as the PGA of America, the European Tour and the PGA Tour tried to adjust with so many moving parts.

The Ryder Cup was scheduled for Sept. 25-27 at Whistling Straits, and because of a reconfigured golf schedule brought on by the pandemic, that would have been one week after the U.S. Open.

Now, the Ryder Cup will move to Sept. 24-26 in 2021. It's the second time in the last two decades the Ryder Cup was postponed. It was moved off the odd-numbered years in 2001 because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"Unlike other major sporting events that are played in existing stadiums, we had to make a decision now about building facilities to host the 2020 Ryder Cup at Whistling Straits," PGA of America CEO Seth Waugh said. "It became clear that as of today, our medical experts and the public authorities in Wisconsin could not give us certainty that conducting an event responsibly with thousands of spectators in September would be possible. Given that uncertainty, we knew rescheduling was the right call."

The spectators who support both the U.S. and European sides are what make the Ryder Cup

such a unique and compelling event and playing without them was not a realistic option."

The PGA Tour was involved because the Presidents Cup — matches every other year between Americans and an international team from everywhere but Europe — was scheduled for 2021 at Quail Hollow Club in North Carolina.

While the Presidents Cup doesn't have the level of tradition or rivalry as the nearly century-old Ryder Cup, it was a corporate sellout for the PGA Tour. Voiding various vendor contracts figures to be costly for the PGA Tour in a year in which it already has spent millions helping support so many tournaments that were canceled by the shutdown.

The Ryder Cup is the main financial lifeline for the European Tour, and now it must wait until 2023 for the matches in Italy.

Franco Cimentini, president of the Italian Golf Federation, told The Associated Press that the postponement gives Rome more time to prepare the Marco Simone Golf and Country Club.

"We would have been ready (by 2023), and now we'll be ready by 2023," Cimentini said. "We're about to inaugurate the course. We don't have problems."

Pushing back the Ryder Cup puts it in the same year as the Solheim Cup for the second time. The Solheim Cup is at Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio, and is scheduled to finish on Labor Day.

When the Ryder Cup was postponed because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the Solheim Cup in Minnesota and the Ryder Cup in England were played in consecutive weeks in 2002.

MLB

Positive tests add to unease

Force cancellation of workouts

By CHARLES ODUM
Associated Press

As baseball nears the two-week countdown to the start of its delayed season, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to keep more players, including Boston Red Sox projected opening day starter Eduardo Rodriguez, off the field.

On Tuesday, one day after Major League Baseball released its 60-game schedule, there was continued evidence of the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

The San Francisco Giants suspended workouts at Oracle Park as they awaited the results of weekend tests for the coronavirus. The Chicago Cubs' workout was delayed.

Oakland left-hander Jake Diekmann, who has ulcerative colitis, an autoimmune condition, said teams having to call off workouts because of delays in test results "just can't happen."

"I know they're trying their hardest, but I don't know if that's good enough for right now," Diekmann said Tuesday. "It's a little worrisome. Say we go on a 10-day road trip and we only get results one time. That's not very good with 45 or 50 people in a clubhouse at one time."

Giants manager Gabe Kapler said one missed day wouldn't put his club behind. He said he expects the testing process to improve.

"I feel as confident today as I did yesterday," Kapler said. "I understand that there are going to be hiccups along the way. ... I think more than anything I just maintain a level of empathy for everybody that's working really hard to get our camp up and running, but also across the league and for all the clubs that are working really hard to put their players in a position to have success. Nobody expected this to be easy and everybody is doing the best that they can."

The Giants already have had prospect Hunter Bishop and pitcher Luis Madero test positive.

Rodriguez, who broke out in



RON SCHWANE/AP

Indians manager Terry Francona watches Monday during practice at Progressive Field in Cleveland.

2019 as a star, and Red Sox prospect Bobby Dalbec tested positive for the virus.

Rodriguez had not reported to camp after informing the team that he had been around relatives who had been ill. Dalbec, a third baseman, also is home and is asymptomatic.

Manager Ron Roenicke said it is "just unfortunate" the positive test could jeopardize Rodriguez's chances to start on opening day.

Rodriguez had career-best numbers with 19 wins and a 3.81 ERA in 2019.

Also, the Kansas City Royals announced right-hander Brad Keller and first baseman Ryan O'Hearn had positive tests and gave the team permission to announce the results.

Keller, 24, said he has "minor symptoms that remind me more of an allergy attack."

The threat of an infection was

enough for the Cleveland Indians to keep outfielder Franmil Reyes away from camp. Reyes was told to stay home after he was seen on social media attending a weekend holiday party without wearing a mask.

It was an example that off-field activities can affect a player's status.

Manager Terry Francona said Reyes would be re-tested "when it's appropriate."

Cole gets first lesson in protocol

By JAKE SEINER
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Gerrit Cole couldn't have expected the New York Yankees to take the ball away from him just one batter into his first home start in the Bronx.

But the team's new \$324 million ace learned the hard way about one of baseball's new coronavirus safety protocols Tuesday night during an intrasquad game at Yankee Stadium.

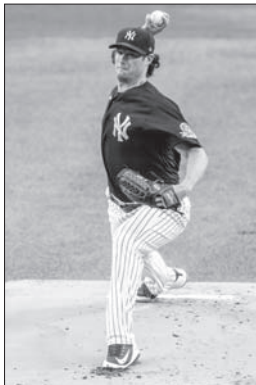
Cole allowed a home run to the second hitter he faced, Miguel Andujar, one pitch after being forced to give up the ball he used to strike out leadoff man Mike Tauchman.

"I liked that ball," Cole grumbled on the mound.

Among the safety steps instituted by Major League Baseball for this virus-shortened season is that pitchers can't reuse a baseball once it has been touched by other players. After Cole struck out Tauchman swinging, catcher Gary Sanchez whipped the ball around the infield — a customary ritual that's frowned upon in MLB's 2020 operations manual.

Cole shot the dugout a confused look when coaches called for the ball. Andujar crushed the next pitch into the empty right-field seats.

"We weren't exactly sure if we were supposed to keep it or not," Cole said. "We kind



J. CONRAD WILLIAMS JR., NEWSDAY/AP

New York Yankees pitcher Gerrit Cole throws during the first inning of an intrasquad game Tuesday in New York.

of made a joke about it. Looked like I probably should have kept it."

Yankees manager Aaron Boone said the club is still trying to nail down some of the protocols in MLB's 101-page manual — one reason the team is scheduling so many of these intrasquads early in preseason camp. He said he wasn't sure if Sanchez was supposed to throw the ball around the infield or if umpires would make them throw out the baseball during the regular season if he did.

"I have to get to the bottom of that," Boone said.

Safe: Young players feel 'bulletproof'

FROM BACK PAGE

Freddie Freeman, underscored the fragility of MLB's plan to navigate the pandemic.

There's also worry regarding what happens when players are away from work and beyond whatever bubble can be created at the ballpark.

"Guys are 23, 24. They're young. They're in a sense bulletproof," Marlins manager Don Mattingly said. "But if we're going to run around at night and do whatever we want to do, we're going to put everybody's family at risk."

Long lines of cars at the virus testing site at the Marlins' ballpark provide the team with a daily reminder of the hazards off the field.

Players broadly acknowledge they must police themselves — and each other. Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw said he trusts his teammates to act responsibly away from the ballpark, but he acknowledged it might be harder for players who are single or living in confined spaces like apartments.

"Everyone has to take accountability for being as safe as possible, and I have trust in that," Kershaw said. "If you want to see the season through, if you want to give it the best shot, you can't be stupid."

MLB has given players guidance regarding off-the-field conduct during the pandemic, discouraging the sort of after-the-game activities that have been part of baseball since before Babe Ruth toasted his first home run.

Or, as Chicago Cubs manager David Ross put it: "We're not going to be able to go out to bars. That would be an extremely selfish move."

Potential repercussions extend beyond any player seeking a thirst-quencher to his

family, teammates, opponents and even the sport's ability to continue.

Part of the motivation for good behavior might be the same thing that drives most things in baseball — wins and losses.

The defending NL East champion Braves were rocked at the start of camp by the positive tests. Their setback underscored the new weight of the annual preseason mantra, "If we can stay healthy ..."

"I think we all recognize that the team that is hit the least hard by the virus, that's able to keep themselves healthy out there, is going to have the best chance to compete," Houston Astros general manager James Click said.

For a major leaguer, it's counterintuitive: Avoid crowds.

Teamwork can help players adopt an appropriately low-key lifestyle.

"I just make Christian Yelich get me everything, man," Milwaukee Brewers outfielder Ryan Braun said. "That's my strategy. I send him text messages with my grocery requests, all my food requests."

Braun was joking, of course, but Brewers manager Craig Counsell said each player must decide how seriously to take the virus.

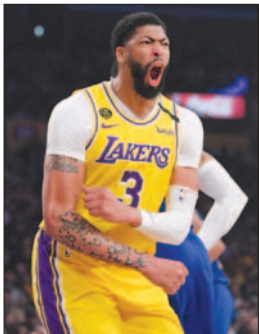
"Everybody treats COVID differently," Counsell said. "Everyone has their own viewpoint of it. In this case, we all have to understand what can happen if there's a number of positive tests — it's not going to work. So, we have to have to all do this together."

"It's not something I'm going to have to plead with them about. They're fully aware of it. They are the ones that are going to be pleading with each other."

AP sports writers Jay Cohen in Chicago, Beth Harris in Los Angeles, Steve Megargee in Milwaukee and Kristie Rieken in Houston contributed to this report.

NBA

Teams on the cusp of having real practices



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis is expected to be among the players in the league who begin having team practices this week in Orlando.

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

Practice facilities in the NBA have been open for a couple of months, with one major element missing from them.

No team has had an actual practice yet. Most of the work that has gone on in those buildings during the NBA's shutdown has been voluntary, and all of it has been of the individual variety — one player working at one basket with one ball. That changes starting Thursday, when the first handful of teams at the Disney complex will be permitted to have full-fledged practices again.

"Every day will be an adventure, a little bit of, 'OK, here's where we are today, this practice will reflect this, tomorrow's practice might be totally different,'" Houston coach Mike D'Antoni said. "And that's what makes it interesting. It makes it fun. But it's a little bit like a training camp. Every year you know you lay out all these grand plans and about the third practice you go, 'Ooop, they're out.'"

The teams that arrived at Disney on Tuesday, assuming quarantines are completed and other issues haven't popped

'Every day will be an adventure.'

Mike D'Antoni
Houston Rockets coach

up, will likely be permitted to practice sometime Thursday. More teams arrive Wednesday and Thursday, so their first practice sessions, in theory, would be as early as Friday and Saturday respectively.

Teams will be assigned a three-hour window and be able to run practice on a pair of side-by-side courts, with training and weight rooms nearby. Disney staff will clean and disinfect everything after one team leaves, preparing it for the next team to arrive.

"Just like with probably everything the league is doing, I think it'd be wise to have a degree of flexibility sprinkled in with everything that you're planning, a degree of being able to either back off or turn it up a little bit, either way," Milwaukee coach Mike Budenholzer said. "But to be honest with you, that happens a lot even in the

normal season. There's a plan for the first practice and we'll see how it goes."

Players haven't even been allowed to play 1-on-1 yet at team facilities, per the rules of the individual workouts. That all changes at Disney, where teams will be able to practice for about two weeks before a series of three scrimmages begin on July 22. The season resumes on July 30. Players have said throughout the shutdown that having only three weeks of actual practice to get ready for game action may not be enough — but that's what the league ultimately decided the schedule would allow.

Most NBA coaches — D'Antoni, Budenholzer, Dallas' Rick Carlisle and more — are going into this believing that plans have to be flexible.

"It's not going to be a typical training camp where you jump in on Day One and just go full-bore," Carlisle said. "Our players have done a great job of working on their individual conditioning with individual workouts with the coaches on the floor on a 1-to-1 basis ... so I feel really good about where we're at. But this is a different situation, it's a different time, it's a different set of circumstances."

Beal, Dinwiddie opt out of restart

By STEPHEN WYHNO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Wizards leading scorer Bradley Beal and Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie won't take part in the restart of the NBA season, two significant absences in the Eastern Conference playoff race.

Beal is out because of a right rotator cuff injury. Dinwiddie announced that he is still testing positive for coronavirus.

Washington, Orlando and Brooklyn are the three teams left in the chase for the final two playoff spots in the East. If the Wizards finish within four games of whichever club finishes eighth, then two games will be played to determine the No. 8 seed.

"He's worked religiously to get this thing back to where it feels right, and it just hasn't felt right," said Wizards general manager Tommy Sheppard, who doesn't

believe Beal's injury will linger long-term or require surgery. "To hear him say himself that he's just not right right now, I've got to keep working. I've got more work to do," made that decision much easier."

Washington will also be without forward Davis Bertans, who decided to opt out of playing as a pending free agent, and injured guard John Wall. With Beal and Bertans out, a Wizards team that has been without Wall all season will have to replace more than 40 points per game if it is to somehow get into that postseason mix.

"Going to Orlando is very important — it's a very big opportunity — but would it make sense if we went there and Bradley's injured?" Sheppard said. "Let's say our next season starts in December, who's to say he's ready for next season? We're trying to mitigate risk and give him the best opportunity to have a great



NICK WASS/AP

Washington Wizards guard Bradley Beal, the team's leading scorer this season, won't take part in the restart of the NBA season because of a right rotator cuff injury.

year next year, which is better for him obviously, for us obviously, big picture."

Beal averaged 30.5 points a game this season, almost twice as much as Bertans, the Wizards' No. 2 scorer. The 27-year-old Beal was preparing to play, even while the decision was up in the air.

"I was loving my game this year and how I was playing towards the end of the year," he said last week. "It's more or less going to be a decision that comes down to the medical staff and I, just because of our precautions and just coming back from being zero to 100. Then I had some nagging stuff at the end of the year we're trying to clean up, too."

That team said that was shoulder discomfort Beal experienced early in the season and it worsened over time. The decision to

hold him out of play at Walt Disney World was made in consultation with chief of athletic care and performance Daniel Medina, orthopedist Dr. Wiemi Douguigh, Beal and his representatives.

"This was a difficult decision and one that I did not take lightly as the leader of this team," Beal said in a statement.

At least six players on the Nets have tested positive for the virus. But Brooklyn general manager said last week there was no discussion of the team not traveling to Florida for the resumption of the NBA season.

"After another positive test yesterday and considering the symptoms, (the Nets), team doctors and I have decided that it would be in the best interest for me and the team that I do not play in Orlando," Dinwiddie wrote on Twitter.

"I will be supporting the guys every step of the way!"

Beal's absence also all-but clinches the NBA scoring title for Houston's James Harden, who would be mathematically assured of staying ahead of Beal by scoring a total of 12 points in the seeding games. If Harden sits out any of Houston's last eight games, that would also be enough to ensure his average — 34.4 points per game — does not fall below Beal's.

Beal becomes the second player in NBA history to average at least 30 points in a season where he was not an All-Star. The other was Utah's Adrian Dantley, who averaged 30.7 points in 1982-83. Dantley appeared in only 22 games that season.

AP Basketball Writer Tim Reynolds in Miami contributed to this report.



KATHY WILLEMS/AP

Brooklyn Nets guard Spencer Dinwiddie said that he is still testing positive for coronavirus and won't participate in the restart.

SPORTS



Cleared to return
NASCAR driver Johnson tests negative, can race again » **Page 21**

Eight-year veteran pitcher Nick Vincent signed last week with the Miami Marlins and had to quarantine for two days in his hotel room while awaiting clearance to join workouts.

TONY AVELAR / AP

MLB

Safe at home?

Inside:

■ More positive tests result in more workouts being canceled, Page 22

Off-field behavior will be decisive

By STEVEN WINE
Associated Press

Reliever Nick Vincent signed last week with the Miami Marlins and settled in for two days of quarantine in his hotel room while awaiting clearance to join workouts.

"That was a little bit different," he said. "In 48 hours, you're definitely a little stir-crazy."

Vincent spent a lot of time watching TV, including the

news, which reinforced that it was wise to lay low with the coronavirus crisis worsening in Florida and much of the country.

And as Major League Baseball attempts to salvage the 2020 season, behavior away from the ballpark will help determine the outcome. Just like on the field, success will depend on how many players are safe at home.

"That's going to be the biggest challenge for this game to move forward — the off-the-field stuff and what guys do," said Vincent, an eight-year major league veteran. "It's just going to take one team to mess it up

for everybody. I hope everybody gets that. It'll take five guys to get a whole team sick, and then if a whole team is sick, that could end the season for everybody else."

Multiple issues could sabotage baseball's relaunch. Some players — including David Price of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Ryan Zimmerman of the Washington Nationals — decided not to take part because of the health risk, and testing glitches further raised concerns. Positive tests for four Atlanta Braves, including four-time All-Star first baseman

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GREGORY BULL / AP

"If you want to see the season through ... you can't be stupid."

Clayton Kershaw

Dodgers pitcher, on players taking personal responsibility for their actions off the field

Beal, Dinwiddie decide to sit out NBA restart » Page 23

